

ER

Written by  
Michael Crichton

FIRST DRAFT

February 18, 1994

An account of 24 hours in a Boston  
hospital emergency ward on March 17,  
St. Patrick's Day.

ER

CAST

RICHIE GREENE  
ROSS  
PETER BENTON  
BETH LEWIS  
JOHN CARTER  
MORGENSTERN  
TRACY YOUNG

The Day Shift

TIMMY (Clerk)  
HATHAWAY (Head Nurse)  
HALEH HOMAYOJIAN (Nurse)  
WENDY GOLDMAN (Nurse)  
MALIK (Aide)

The Night Shift

JERRY (Clerk)  
OLIGARIO (Head Nurse)  
LYDIA WOODWARD (Nurse)  
PAM PEREZ (Nurse)  
PAULIE (Aide)

Hospital Personnel

SPECIALIST  
MORT HARRIS  
ANAESTHETIST  
RADIOLOGIST  
RESIDENT  
KELLY  
ADMINISTRATOR  
SCRUB NURSE #1  
SCRUB NURSE #2  
ANAESTHETIST #2  
SURGEON #1  
SURGEON #2  
CHERYL (OR Nurse)  
OR NURSE  
LEE (Greene's Cute Tech)

RACHEL GREENE  
JENNIFER GREENE  
PAUL (Lewis's Ex)

ER

CAST

(CONT'D)

THE PATIENTS

Act One

TROOPER  
WILSON (severed hand)  
JACKSON (chest injury)  
WOMAN (vomits blood)  
BARR (hits on Lewis)  
FITZKEE (workman's comp)  
REZEK (shoulder fracture)  
CANELLI (his father's dead)

Act Two

HARPER (woman w/cut)  
MOTHER (kid w/infected ear)  
ERVIN (Black who wants tests)  
GRANDCHILD (with sword)  
MARTIN (cop who shot himself)  
LOGAN (tense mother)  
MRS. MARTIN (cop's wife)  
INTERPRETER  
CABBY  
PREGNANT WOMAN

Act Three

CONFUSED WOMAN (one line)  
MRS. O'ROURKE (librarian)  
KAREN (kid swallowed key)  
CHILD (key kid)  
ELDERLY MAN (security)  
PARKER (man with cancer)

Act Four

MRS. RASKIN (hangnail)  
GIRL (ectopic pregnancy)  
FATHER (arguing over kid)  
WIFE (arguing over kid)

Act Five

ROOMMATE (Hathaway's)  
SUZANNE (wrecked dad's car)  
DAD  
LILY (mother insists on shot)  
KID

Act Six

WAITRESS  
TEDDY (appendicitis)  
LAWKOWSKI (scared guy)  
HARVEY (aneurysm)  
MRS. HARVEY

Act Seven

PRETTY GIRL (burn legs)  
LLEWELLYN (insomniac)  
ANNETTE (abused child)  
COP (brings in diabetic)  
MURPHY (drunk)

ER

TIME OF DAY

ACT I      5:00 AM TO 8:30 AM  
ACT II     9:00 AM TO 11:30 AM  
ACT III    11:30 AM TO 4:00 PM  
ACT IV     7:00 PM TO 10:00 PM  
ACT V      10:00 PM TO 12:00 AM  
ACT VI     12:00 AM TO 2:00 AM  
ACT VII    2:00 AM TO 5:00 AM

ER

SETS

INTERIORS:

HOSPITAL

Room  
Treatment Room  
Corridor  
Waiting Room  
Admitting Area  
Corridor  
Ambulance Entrance  
Examining Room  
Another Examining Room  
Surgical Examining Room  
Another Surgical Room  
Hallway  
Doctor's Lounge  
Cafeteria  
Lab  
Suture Room  
Lobby  
Surgeon's Changing Room

ANOTHER HOSPITAL (MODERN)

Harris Group Office

EXTERIORS:

HOSPITAL

Emergency Entrance

ER

ACT ONE

1 BLACK SCREEN (INT. HOSPITAL ROOM)

1

Sound of SNORING. Flash on MAIN TITLE. BRING UP a low MURMUR of non-specific b.g. noise. A glaring white rectangle appears, and a silhouetted female figure: a nurse has opened the door, WOODWARD.

WOODWARD  
(silhouetted)  
Doctor Greene... Doctor Greene.

GREENE (O.S.)  
Uuuuh. What is it?

WOODWARD  
Patient for you, Doctor Greene.

In the light of the open door, we see RICHIE GREENE, a medical resident in his mid-thirties, lies sprawled on a stretcher in his whites. Without opening his eyes:

GREENE  
Can't the intern take it?

WOODWARD  
It's for you, Doctor.

Greene groans, coming awake.

GREENE  
What time is it?

WOODWARD  
Five o'clock.

As she speaks, he sits up, looks at his watch.

GREENE  
All right. Can't the intern take it?

WOODWARD  
It's Doctor Ross.

GREENE  
(yawning)  
Oh, Doctor Ross. All right. Find me a room and an eye-vee set, I'll be right there.

He stands, looks at his watch, shakes his head, and exits the room; CAMERA FOLLOWS.

(CONTINUED)

1

CONTINUED:

1

He comes out into a relatively blindingly white corridor of a big city emergency room, and walks along it, still barely awake. Distantly, we hear SOMEBODY SINGING "WILD THING."

Greene comes around the corner to find a good-looking MAN in his thirties, leaning across the clerical desk, singing vigorously. The night clerk, JERRY, is looking a little disgusted. The man wears sportcoat and tie, and is very drunk. Greene walks up behind him, puts an arm around his shoulder.

GREENE

Come on, Tom.

ROSS

Richie-boy... oooh, did I wake you up?

GREENE

(yawning)

Come on, Tom.

ROSS

You're a real friend. I want you to know that, a real friend, to get out of bed for me.

GREENE

'Sall right. We have a room?

JERRY

Room three is free.

ROSS

Room three is free. Three is free, free for three.

GREENE

Come on, Tom.

He leads Ross down the corridor. Ross flings an arm over Greene's shoulder, and starts singing again: "Wild Thing." They go down the hall, and into a room.

2

INT. TREATMENT ROOM

2

Woodward is setting up an I.V. stand by the bed. Greene is rocking back and forth, half asleep on his feet. Ross is taking off his sportcoat, and talking. The whole thing has the aspect of a well-known routine.

(CONTINUED)



ROSS

I want you to know, Richie, I really appreciate this, you may have noticed, I am a little under the weather...

(to Nurse)

Dee five W, no sterile solution, I need the dextrose.

GREENE

(absently)

Give him six hundred milligrams of ASA.

ROSS

Aspirin, that's a good idea, I almost forgot aspirin, that's good thinking, Doctor...

While he is talking, he's rolling up one sleeve, and lying down on the couch. Greene is tourniquetting the forearm, and swabbing it. Ross lies back.

ROSS

Oh, Richie, you should have seen her, you should have seen the knockers, I mean the rack on that girl, and she said to me, 'I didn't know pediatricians could be so sexy,' and I said, 'honey, you ain't seen nothing yet...'

(winces, looks over)

Everything okay?

GREENE

(inserts needle)

Just lie down, Tom.

ROSS

Gimme a fast drip, I need the hydration...

GREENE

Don't worry, Tom.

Ross lies back, then suddenly sits up again, drunkenly solicitous.

ROSS

How is Jennifer, Richie? How is your beautiful wife?

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

GREENE

Jennifer's fine, Tom...

ROSS

You settle your problems?

GREENE

Everything's fine, Tom, just lie back.

ROSS

That's good, Richie. We'd hate to lose you in the ER.

(sighs)

I can't tell you how much I appreciate this, I really do...

Ross is out cold. Woodward comes in with the aspirin and a cup of water.

WOODWARD

Here's the aspirin...

She looks, stops. Greene is taping down the IV needle.

GREENE

Give him two thousand cc's in a fast-drip, keep an eye on it, don't let it run dry.

WOODWARD

Does he always do this?

GREENE

Only on his nights off.

(turns to leave)

I'm going to bed. Wake me at six-thirty.

He leaves. Woodward steps forward, adjusts the flow valve on Ross's IV.

3 INT. CORRIDOR

3

TRACKING Greene as he goes back to his room, enters, closes the door, and lies down on the stretcher again in all his clothes. He sighs, and drops to sleep. Almost immediately, a rectangle of light crosses his body.

WOODWARD (O.S.)

Doctor Greene.

(CONTINUED)

GREENE

Uuuuh.

WOODWARD (O.S.)

Doctor Greene.

GREENE

(dreaming)

I told him I wouldn't buy that refrigerator, and I won't.

Woodward enters the room and shakes him gently.

WOODWARD

Doctor Greene. Richie.

GREENE

(coming awake)

What is it? Can't the intern take it?

WOODWARD

Can I give Mrs. Williston more morphine? She's complaining of pain.

GREENE

Give her ten milligrams eye-em.

WOODWARD

Thanks, Richie.

The rectangle of light disappears. Dark again. Almost immediately:

WOODWARD (O.S.)

Dr. Greene.

Greene rolls toward the light.

GREENE

What is it?

WOODWARD (O.S.)

It's six-thirty, Doctor Greene.

He gets up, rubs his face. CAMERA MOVES CLOSE TO him. BRING UP sound of SIRENS.

4 TV IMAGE - A SCAFFOLDING COLLAPSING - DAY 4

In horrific SLOW MOTION, a scaffolding begins to buckle, the workmen slipping, clinging and then falling, some of them free-fall as boards and steel rods slam down like missiles, striking cars and pedestrians below... Mayhem ... Screams...

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This was the scene at 8:15 this morning at a construction site on the Loop, where a scaffolding collapsed during rush hour. A local cameraman took this extraordinary footage of the tragedy, which so far has left at least twelve people injured...

5 THE WAITING ROOM 5

PETER BENTON, a cocky surgical resident, coming to work, sees the TV set. He immediately spins to:

6 INT. ADMITTING AREA 6

TIMMY, the day admitting clerk, is talking on the phone, writing.

TIMMY

Yes, well, how many do you figure? ... You got any estimate of the extent of the injuries? Yeah, okay. How long until they arrive? Oh yeah? That soon...

He hangs up. SIRENS still BUILDING. Timmy turns to HATHAWAY, the attractive day head nurse:

TIMMY

Notify the floors, scaffolding collapse on the Loop, they're bringing in ten people, seven critical.

BENTON

(breezy)

Good day for us surgeons...

Benton keeps going. Hathaway goes to a wall phone and dials; Timmy also dials. SIRENS BUILD.

7 INT. A CORRIDOR 7

Greene give morning orders to his STUDENT, who makes notes.

(CONTINUED)

GREENE

Mrs. Williston in room four needs a crit and count; the man in five has a question A.M.I. and ought to have a sed rate, S.G.O.T., L.D.H., cardiac enzymes and another 12-lead. The guy in six needs a rectal for bleeding, he may have a C.A. of the bowel, you better rush him for a set of lower GI's, X-ray will say they can't do it but convince them, then the woman in seven is a possible pancreatitis, so we want enzyme levels. Dr. Ross is in eight, sleeping it off, wake him up and get him out of there. In nine, I need a uric acid, a blood sugar, and a ---

With SIRENS BUILDING, Benton strolls past them.

GREENE

-- you know what that's about?

BENTON

(nonchalant)

Scaffolding collapsed on the Loop, they're sending a dozen hot ones.

GREENE

(to student)

Forget all that stuff. Who's on now?

BENTON

Just us, guy.

GREENE

(to student)

Call Beth Lewis, call the seventh and eighth floor, tell 'em we need anybody they can spare.

8 INT. AMBULANCE ENTRANCE DOORS

8

As they slam open, and blue-uniformed STATE TROOPERS wheel in the first of the stretchers with blood-spattered victims. As they pass the admitting desk.

TIMMY

Room three... that way!

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

The troopers wheel the stretchers. Hathaway with a clipboard trots alongside it. The patient is a man in a suit; most of his body is covered with a blanket, but his shoulders and a part of his face are bloody.

HATHAWAY

What's your name, sir? Tell me your name!

9 AMBULANCE ENTRANCE DOORS

9

Another patient on another stretcher, banging through. Timmy passes out forms:

TIMMY

Room six... That way!

The troopers hesitate.

TROOPER

Which way?

TIMMY

(pointing)

That way!

10 AN EXAMINING ROOM

10

Ross is sitting up, pulling out his I.V. A bloody body wheeled into the room next to him.

ROSS

Ooh boy. Good morning.

11 THE AMBULANCE ENTRANCE

11

The doors swing open again, another patient:

TIMMY

Surgical one, down to the end and right, first door to the right.

The patient, EDWARD WILSON, a middle-aged and distinguished-looking man, appears neat and trim except for his left hand which is wrapped in a bloody towel. CAMERA STAYS WITH the rolling stretcher. The nurse is new, uncertain, GOLDMAN

GOLDMAN

What's your name?

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

Edward Wilson.

GOLDMAN

(writing)

Mr. Wilson, what is your address?

WILSON

Forty-seven...

(wincing)

forty-seven...

GOLDMAN

Mr. Wilson... uh, sir... uh...

We come around the corner and suddenly, Benton is there, directing, totally in charge. Not casual now.

BENTON

Come on, come on, get him in here, how you doing, sir? Everything's gonna be fine. Is it your hand?

Wilson nods weakly.

BENTON

Okay, let's have a look at it. Light! Light! Let's get moving now. Sorry about your suit, sir...

A team of workers has descended upon Mr. Wilson, including several orderlies who are cutting away his expensive suit.

BENTON

(unwrapping towel)

You'll be fine, Mr. Wilson, just think pleasant thoughts.

(to team)

Let's have a crit and count, cross match and get it to the bank, we got a pre-op here, notify the OR and get us a room, call vascular...

(glancing at hand)

... and call orthopedic, get them hopping, this is their lucky day. Your hand's still attached, Mr. Wilson, not by much but it'll be okay. I want an EKG and a BUN, now let's move it. You feel anything in your hand, Mr. Wilson?

Wilson shakes his head weakly.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

BENTON

We're gonna save your hand for  
you, Mr. Wilson, don't you worry  
about a thing.

12 AMBULANCE ENTRANCE

12

The doors swing open again, and another victim, a woman of  
forty, gray hair, and streaks of blood in it; there is a  
bandage over part of her face.

TIMMY

Room seven. Room seven.  
(watches stretcher go)  
What a way to start the day.  
Morning, Dr. Lewis.

BETH LEWIS, thirties, is running down the corridor.

LEWIS

Hiya, Timmy.

13 EXAMINING ROOM

13

Clusters of people working on the injured patient: cutting  
away the clothing, removing shoes, taking blood pressure,  
drawing blood, starting an I.V. line, sometimes as many as  
three people working on a single arm. The patient,  
JACKSON, is a man. Dialogue is fast.

GREENE

(close to his face)  
Mr. Jackson, where does it hurt?

JACKSON

(weak)  
My chest.

GREENE

Does it hurt when you breathe?

Jackson nods. Greene picks up his stethoscope.

GREENE

Have you coughed any blood?

JACKSON

No.

GREENE

You ever been in a hospital before?

(CONTINUED)



13 CONTINUED:

13

JACKSON

Once. Broke my leg.

GREENE

(stethoscope to ears)

Let me listen.

He applies stethoscope to chest. While he listens, Lewis appears in doorway; they exchange glances, she moves on.

14 ANOTHER EXAMINING ROOM

14

Ross, still in his street clothes, shirtsleeves and tie, drawing blood from the gray-haired WOMAN with streaks of blood. A nurse stands by, HALEH HOMAYOJIAN.

ROSS

Can you move your legs? Move your legs for me, ma'am.

He continues to draw blood, while looking back to see a leg move, then another.

ROSS

Very good. You have any pain in your head? Your neck?

WOMAN

No.

ROSS

Very good. Now I want...

Explosively, she vomits blood all over his shirt and tie. It's shocking but he barely misses a beat.

ROSS

... I want you to tell me if it hurts you to breathe.

WOMAN

No... no...

ROSS

(to Haleh)

She's going into shock. Cover her up, get her matched and start two units as soon as you can with pressure bags. Get the surgeons in here. This is no place for a pediatrician.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

Only then does he look down at his bloody shirt and tie, noticing it for the first time.

15 AMBULANCE DOORS

15

slamming open, and another body coming through. A young man, 20's, bearded, workshirt visible above the blanket, BARR. The clerk asks:

TIMMY

How many more?

TROOPER

At least two. Third one's decapitated.

HATHAWAY

(to Timmy)

What'd he say?

TIMMY

He said two more coming.

16 SURGICAL EXAMINING ROOM

16

Two SPECIALISTS examine Wilson's injured hand, which still lies in the bloody towel. Benton delivers a speech to their backs.

BENTON

No sensation radial, median or ulnar, no pulses, temperature and color as you see, we elevated it, he's gotten five hundred cc's of saline by push, crit's thirty-two-five, he's been sent for typing and cross matching: X-ray is waiting, and the O.R. says they'll have a room for you in twenty minutes.

SPECIALIST

Okay. Let's get him out of here.

The Patient is wheeled out of the room. The Specialists start to leave with him, but Benton pulls one back.

BENTON

Listen, you think you can keep that hand?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

SPECIALIST

It looks pretty good. I think so.

BENTON

That's good. I told him you'd keep it for him. He's counting on you.

SPECIALIST

Peter, you're a smartass.  
(leaning close)  
You'd like to do this case yourself, wouldn't you?

Benton is caught -- that's exactly what he wants. He covers with a joke, imitating Rocky:

BENTON

I could do it. Yeah. I feel strong. I feel ready. I could do it, yeah.

SPECIALIST

You're just a second year resident, Peter. Hyper down.

17 CLOSEUP - BEARDED PATIENT'S FACE

17

He's the man we've seen earlier, Barr. A woman's hand touches the forehead.

LEWIS (O.S.)

You got a two centimeter incision there to sew up; call the stud, get him going.

Her hand moves down, turning the head left and right.

LEWIS (O.S.)

Neck okay?

BARR

Yeah.

LEWIS

Now you have this abrasion on your shoulder but it's minor. How many fingers?

She holds up three fingers.

(CONTINUED)

BARR

Three.

LEWIS

What's your name?

BARR

John Barr.

LEWIS

Where are you?

BARR

Cook County Memorial.

LEWIS

What day is this?

BARR

St. Patrick's Day.

LEWIS

You're fine.

(to assistant)

Get a set of plain skulls and  
keep him for observation in case  
he has a fracture. Vital signs  
Q-fifteen for two hours.

(to patient)

You're going to be just fine,  
Mr. Barr.

Barr is grinning at her, half in relief, and half in a sexual come-on.

BARR

You're beautiful.

LEWIS

Thank you.

BARR

You married?

LEWIS

No. I'm a doctor.

BARR

Well then, listen --

LEWIS

(patting arm, smiling)

Take care of yourself. You don't  
want to fall on your face twice  
in one day.

Benton gently palpates the abdomen of the gray-haired Woman.

BENTON

How much did she vomit?

HALEH

Couple hundred cc's. All over  
Dr. Ross.

BENTON

Deep breath, ma'am... that's  
good... now another... any pain?  
No? How about here?

The patient winces abruptly.

BENTON

All right, ma'am, it's going to  
be fine...

(to Malik)

Call the O.R. and get a room. Have  
Ashley and what's-his-name get a  
look at her if they're around.  
What's her crit?

MALIK

Twenty-three.

BENTON

Forget Ashley. Get her up to the  
floor right away, you got a crush  
injury to the duodenum and...

He pauses to look at the Woman, who is unconscious.

BENTON

Ah hell.

(touches her neck)

No pulse, she's coded. Code blue!

Almost as he speaks, PEOPLE begin pouring into the room  
on a run, taking up positions around the body.

BENTON

Get a time, it just happened.

HALEH

Six forty-seven.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

BENTON

I knew I should have had breakfast  
this morning. Paddles! Come on!  
I want four milligrams epinephrine  
and 275 lidocaine, now!

(takes paddles, looks  
at monitor)

That's a shockable rhythm. Come  
on! What do you think this is,  
the World's Fair?

19 NEAR THE AMBULANCE DOORS

19

The doors swing open, and two more stretchers fly in.

TIMMY

Surgical two, and surgical three,  
down and around to the right.

(to Goldman  
running past)

We got anybody in those rooms?

Goldman just shrugs. Hathaway comes up to Timmy.

HATHAWAY

Call Pathology: we got a customer  
who isn't going to be charged for  
services.

20 IN AN EXAMINING ROOM

20

CLOSE ON AN ASHEN DEAD FACE as Lewis closes the eyes and  
pulls the sheet over the man's Italian face.

In the adjacent bed, Greene is probing a man's back,  
FITZKEE. Fitzkee's on his side, away from the death.  
But Greene has seen.

GREENE

Hurt there? All right, now, I'm  
going to check your kidneys...

(pounds lower back)

That hurt?

FITZKEE

No.

GREENE

Okay, you can lie back. You  
know what? All you've got is a  
fracture of your ankle.  
Everything else is fine.

(CONTINUED)

FITZKEE

Hey, Doc, do I get worker's comp?

Greene looks disgusted. He turns to leave.

GREENE

The story is, you're still alive.

FITZKEE

Yeah, I know, but I got a few bills, and --

As Greene moves away, the patient sees the dead body beside him.

FITZKEE

Oh.

GREENE

(leaving)

Yeah.

An aide, Malik, sticking his head into the room.

MALIK

Dr. Benton, you have patients in surgical two and three, one of them looks bad.

BENTON

(still resuscitating)

That's nice, but you see, this lady's heart's stopped and she needs it pretty badly. Call the AR.

MALIK

The other residents are in surgery.

BENTON

Well, get some of them out of surgery.

(flaring anger)

Can't you see I'm busy? Time?

HALEH

Two minutes.

BENTON

(to patient)

Come on, honey. You're making me a little nervous here.

A MAN SCREAMING on a stretcher, writhing, sweating:  
MR. REZEK.

REZEK

Aaaah! Give me something! It  
hurts! Ah, God!

TWO UNIFORMED TROOPERS stand helplessly at either side of  
him, not knowing what to do. Lewis enters the room.

LEWIS

Okay, what've we got?  
(examining patient)  
Get his clothes off him.

The Troopers look perplexed.

LEWIS

Come on, get his goddamned clothes  
off him!

She herself is unbuttoning Rezek's shirt and pulling  
away his tie. He is screaming.

REZEK

Gimme something! I can't stand it!

LEWIS

Just a minute, sir, everything is  
going to be...

She hesitates -- she has uncovered his shoulder: exposed  
white jagged bones piercing the flesh.

LEWIS

... just fine. We'll get you  
something for pain, just hold on.  
Does anything else hurt?

REZEK

My knee. Bad. Aaaah!

At this moment, HATHAWAY comes into the room. She goes  
past the troopers slipping off the man's shoes, directly  
to Lewis' side.

LEWIS

Get the bloods, start an IV, notify  
X-ray we have at least one fracture  
and call orthopedics.

HATHAWAY

Okay, Beth.

(CONTINUED)



22 CONTINUED:

22

LEWIS

And give him half a cc of tetanus  
and five of morphine right away.

Ross sticks his head in the door. The cops stare at his  
bloody shirt front: he looks like a butcher.

ROSS

Anybody need help?

LEWIS

Check his knee.

23 THE WAITING AREA

23

Greene comes out, reads his filecard.

GREENE

Mrs. Canelli?... Anybody here named  
Canelli? Anybody here a relative  
of Mr. Antonio Canelli?

A young man of 25 stands. Tense. Dressed in a Bekins  
uniform.

CANELLI

I'm his son.

GREENE

I'm Richie Greene, hi.

As they shake hands, Greene steers him away from the  
others, quietly.

CANELLI

My father... he's here?

GREENE

(quietly)  
As you know, Mr. Canelli, he was  
in the accident this morning. If  
you would come with me...

CANELLI

(shouting)  
No! Just tell me! Is he here!  
Tell me!

Greene tells him, a whisper. The reaction is immediate.  
Canelli lunges, begins to pound Greene with clenched  
fists.

(CONTINUED)

CANELLI

You bastard you bastard you  
bastard, don't say that! My  
father! What are you bastard  
... damn...

Greene deflects the blows, which are wild. Canelli turns and starts to pound and kick the wall. Greene tries to comfort him, to keep him from injuring himself. Others waiting are staring.

GREENE

I'm sorry, Mr. Canelli...

CANELLI

You're sorry?...

The others in the waiting room stare dully; they can't hear the words but they know what's happening and they could be next. Canelli sits, starts to cry. Greene comforts him.

Rezek is still writhing. Hathaway withdraws a needle.

LEWIS

Okay, Mr. Rezek, you should feel  
better in a minute...

REZEK

What'd you give me?

LEWIS

Morphine. We're going to get  
you --

BENTON

(entering with Malik)  
OR's waiting for him. Sir, we'll  
take you up right now. Let's go.

They start to wheel him out. The trolley bumps the door, the man winces and cries out.

BENTON

Easy there! Sorry, sir, but you're  
going to be just fine, you'll be  
good as new... (etc.)

Ross and Lewis are alone in the room. They both sigh, exhausted, and an ORDERLY comes in to clean up; they hurry out of the room.

They come out into the hallway. It's clear, stretchers gone.

ROSS

There any others?

HATHAWAY

(passing)

No, that's it.

LEWIS

(incredulous)

That's it?

HATHAWAY

Yeah. Last two were D.O.A.

LEWIS

So that's it.

HATHAWAY

Yeah. For now.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

26 THE DOCTOR'S LOUNGE

26

A cheaply furnished room off the waiting room. Here the interns and residents write their reports; there is a coffee machine in the corner; newspapers and patient charts scattered all over the place. Benton, Greene, and Lewis slumped on couches and chairs, watching TV.

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And now, here are the headlines for nine o'clock this March seventeenth, St. Patrick's Day. The Japanese Prime Minister said today that Tokyo would end tariffs on rice and other agricultural goods, drawing immediate response...

The NEWS continues over. The three stare dully at the set. When they finally talk, their conversation is desultory; they are exhausted before nine AM.

GREENE

What happened to Ross?

BENTON

He went to change. Somebody barfed on him. That lady.

LEWIS

That lady who arrested?

BENTON

Yeah.

LEWIS

She make it?

BENTON

Yeah. We got her going again. She's in atrial fib, but she's going. She's only fifty.

GREENE

What about that guy's hand?

BENTON

Still in surgery. They'll be working on that all day. Anybody want any coffee?

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

Yeah, I do.

BENTON

How do you take it?

LEWIS

The same as yesterday, and the day before, and the day before that.

BENTON

(getting up)

They call me a smartass.

LEWIS

(to Greene)

You get any sleep last night?

GREENE

About an hour.

LEWIS

I wish you could buy a sleep in a can, like a beer. I'd buy a six pack.

BENTON

(yawning)

The day is just beginning...

(no coffee)

Damn it, the nurses have been in here again, raiding the coffee. Why don't they make their own. I'm going to tell 'em...

He storms toward the door.

GREENE

Never mind.

LEWIS

Never mind.

He stops, hand on the knob.

BENTON

Yeah, never mind.

He pauses, then kicks the door hard, wincing, his foot hurts. He heads back.

GREENE

Don't we get some new students today?

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

Ross and I do. I hope they're good. The last two were really hopeless.

Hathaway comes in the room with a stack of charts.

HATHAWAY

Is something wrong?

BENTON

You bet there is, we're out of coffee again, because the nurses have been taking it, that's what's wrong.

HATHAWAY

(shrugging)

Make some more.

BENTON

Make some more. We work thirty-six hours on, eighteen off, which is ninety hours a week, fifty-two weeks a year, and for that we are paid twenty-three thousand, seven hundred and thirty-nine dollars... before taxes... and... we also have to make the coffee.

HATHAWAY

(leaving)

My heart is breaking.

BENTON

Well, it's true. Where's the filters?

GREENE

In the fridge.

Greene gets up to get it. Goldman sticks her head in.

GOLDMAN

Dr. Greene, your wife is waiting in the cafeteria.

Greene looks at his watch, winces. He forgot.

GREENE

Damn. Be right there.

Everybody in the room looks over at him. Openly concerned.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (3)

26

GREENE

It's fine. Everything is fine.

He exits.

27 INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - MORNING

27

CLOSE ON RACHEL, a girl of four, spooning cereal as her attractive mother, JENNIFER, watches.

RACHEL

I don't want any more.

JENNIFER

Just a few more bites, Rachel.

Greene comes up, rubs his daughter's head.

GREENE

Hi, Rach.

(kisses wife)

Sorry, Jen, we got busy...

RACHEL

Dad, I don't want any more.

JENNIFER

You're always busy.

GREENE

(sitting down)

Yeah, I guess we are.

RACHEL

It tastes ucky.

JENNIFER

It's so hard to plan, I thought we were going to have breakfast together...

GREENE

We had a big one. Scaffolding collapsed, twelve major cases, lotta trauma.

JENNIFER

(concerned)

You getting any sleep?

GREENE

Oh, sure. I'm okay.

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

You look tired, Richie.

RACHEL

Yeah, Dad, you look tired.

GREENE

(joking; to daughter)  
Oh I do, do I?

JENNIFER

Your eyes.

RACHEL

And your ears, too.

GREENE

(smiling)  
My ears are tired? Sounds  
terrible.

Sitting beside his daughter, he points to cereal.

GREENE

You going to eat any more of that?  
(she shakes "no")  
Can I?

He starts eating the rest of her cereal.

RACHEL

It's ucky.

Jennifer is watchful through all this. She has her own agenda today.

JENNIFER

So: what have you decided,  
Richie?

GREENE

About what?

JENNIFER

About the meeting today. With  
Harris.

GREENE

I'll go.

JENNIFER

You won't forget? Or get too  
busy?

(CONTINUED)



27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

GREENE

Promise.

JENNIFER

Because I know they're looking for a new associate, and this could be the perfect time --

GREENE

Jen, I'll go. Really.

JENNIFER

I just think, you join a practice, and we could have a life, you could come home for dinner, see your family, be a normal human being...

GREENE

(edge)

I'll meet Harris today. Okay?

JENNIFER

Okay. Good. I just... I hope you like it.

Greene nods, eats. Doesn't answer.

28 THE DOCTOR'S LOUNGE

28

The TV shows preparations for the St. Patrick's Day parade. Benton, and Lewis now have coffee. Benton stands by the door, looking through the little window in the door out at the admitting area.

BENTON

Oh, will you look... at... that.

The others get up to look, crowding around the window.

29 WHAT THEY SEE

29

Standing by the admitting desk is a young man with a white coat, obviously A MEDICAL STUDENT. He is in every respect immaculate. He is asking questions of Timmy.

30 BACK TO SCENE

30

GREENE

That's the first tailored white coat I've ever seen.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

BENTON  
Isn't he lovely?

LEWIS  
Lovely.

GREENE  
Think he knows anything?

LEWIS  
He knows how to dress.

BENTON  
Well, he's my student, I'll find  
out.

He goes out the door. We see Benton go up and greet  
the Student. They shake hands.

31 BENTON AND THE STUDENT

31

STUDENT  
John Carter.

BENTON  
Peter Benton. You're the surgical  
student?

CARTER (STUDENT)  
Yes. Third year.

BENTON  
(rapid fire)  
Well, we'll be spending a lot of  
time together. Let me show you  
around, so you'll be oriented.  
This is the admitting desk, if you  
need somebody paged or a chart  
called up, get it here. This is  
Timmy, he cracks under pressure,  
don't bother him.  
(as Timmy frowns)  
Now this way is the lab...

He leads Carter off.

32 THE LAB

32

Small, efficient, messy. They poke their heads in.

(CONTINUED)

32

CONTINUED:

32

BENTON

We do crits, counts, spindowns, the technician's on until two A.M., otherwise do it yourself. Chemistries get marked with these slips and put at the desk. Mark everything 'stat' whether you want it fast or not. The chem lab is 7022 and the heme lab is 6944, memorize 'em, you'll be on the phone a lot.

He exits. Carter hurries to follow.

33

THE HALLWAY

33

They walk briskly. Carter confused, as they stop at a cart.

BENTON

We have four IV carts. In this place, everybody gets an IV the minute they come through the door. Use an angiocath with a sixteen needle, you need a large bore in case they're bleeding and you have to transfuse them by push. You know how to start an IV?

CARTER

Actually, ah... No.

BENTON

I thought you were third year.

CARTER

All I've done is dermatology and psychiatry.

BENTON

(disdainful)

The well-dressed specialties. You'll find that surgeons actually try to help people, not just bill them.

Benton picks up some of the IV paraphernalia in disposable plastic packets, which he tears open while talking at breakneck speed.

(CONTINUED)

BENTON

Okay, here's your angiocath, the best way to go is low, pull the skin tight so the veins don't roll, and slip it in. Once you're in, pull this gizmo back, and tape the thing down. Now... this is Barbara Hathaway, she's the head nurse, John Carter...

CARTER

Hi.

HATHAWAY

(passing)

Hi.

BENTON

... she's terrific, keep your hands off her, she goes with an orthopod who was a Big Ten tackle and looks like King Kong. Now once you have the angiocath in the vein, you hook it up to your tubing here, like so, here's your flowball, up is faster, down is slower. Got it?

Carter is confused, nods. Benton still going fast.

BENTON

You want a slowish drip, maybe once every second or two.

(picks up bottles)

IV fluids are dee-five W and sterile saline and if you mix up antibiotics, you inject it straight into the bottles, and be sure to label 'em, with the date, use tape. You know how to tear tape.

CARTER

Well, uh...

BENTON

Man, you don't know anything important about being a doctor. To be a doctor you got to tear tape right, the patients are looking to see if you know what you're doing. Pull like so, and tear vertically. Hmm?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

BENTON (CONT'D)

Before you put the IV in tear a few lengths of tape, put 'em by the bedside, so you're ready to tape up as soon as you're in the vein. Armboards are in every room, that's all there is to it. Okay?

He drops the needle and tubing in Carter's hands, walks on. Carter follows, examining it.

CARTER

Okay...

They pass a stretcher in the hallway. A small boy is curled-up on it, in street clothes. He looks isolated. Nobody around him.

BENTON

(to Goldman)

Get Dr. Ross. Is this kid alone? Is his family here? I mean, he's all alone here.

GOLDMAN

Dr. Ross is off the floor.

BENTON

Never leave a kid alone like this.

They walk on.

BENTON

All along here are medical examining rooms. This is where the pill-pushers kill their victims. But if the surgical EKG is on the blink, you can steal one of theirs. You know how to do an EKG? No? Get one of the girls to show you, I can't do everything. Here's the surgical rooms...

34 INT. SURGICAL ROOM

34

BENTON

This is where the real action is. We use this phone to call the O.R.: extension 6440, memorize it. X-ray is around the corner, they're a bunch of idiots, they scare the shit out of the patients and make 'em wait too long, so whenever you can, go with your patients to X-ray and don't let 'em get scared or hurt.

Moving briskly. Carter is visibly sagging.

BENTON

Mark all X-ray requisitions stat and call for readings. The X-ray residents are always out taking a leak or something, you have to keep on them.

Coming the other way is MORGENSTERN, 59, stocky and sarcastic.

BENTON

And this is Dr. Morgenstern, the head of the ER, don't mess with him, he eats students for breakfast.

Morgenstern shakes hands in a friendly way.

MORGENSTERN

Al Morgenstern.

CARTER

John Carter.

MORGENSTERN

When did that severed hand go up?

BENTON

Vascular took it, an hour ago.

MORGENSTERN

(to Carter)

Dr. Benton is one of our best residents. Learn everything you can from him... except attitude.

They walk on. Despite himself, Benton is a little wounded.

BENTON

He didn't really mean that.

MORGENSTERN (O.S.)

Yes, I did.

They come to the entrance to the suture room.

BENTON

Here's your room, where you'll be sewing people up. You know how to suture? No.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

BENTON (CONT'D)

Okay, I'll show you  
that one.

(to a passing Haleh)

We got anybody to sew?

HALEH

How would I know?

BENTON

There's a great spirit of  
camaraderie around here, everybody  
helps out. Here's the suture room,  
let's see...

36 INT. SUTURE ROOM

36

It looks like a small version of the surgical room.  
A fortyish housewife, HARPER, is waiting there with her  
hand under a RUNNING FAUCET.

BENTON

Good morning, ma'am, I'm Dr.  
Benton and this is Dr. Carter.  
Let's have a look... How'd you do  
this?

HARPER

I broke one of the breakfast dishes.

BENTON

It's a clean cut, we'll have you  
fixed up in no time...

He leads her smoothly along to the little table.

BENTON

That's it, ma'am, just sit down...  
Adjust your light so you have  
plenty of light. Now you'll have  
to fill out the record, describing  
the position of the injury and its  
nature, superficial one point five  
centimeter laceration of left  
digital finger, allegedly occurred  
doing breakfast dishes. Get that  
alleged in there, remember the  
patient's chart is a legal document,  
you don't know whether the story  
is true or not. Get the injury  
exposed and test for any damage to  
nerve and tendons.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BENTON (CONT'D)

You know how to test for... well,  
here's how you do it.

(pricking with pin)

You feel this?

HARPER

Yes...

BENTON

Can you move your finger?

HARPER

Of course, it's just a cut.

GOLDMAN

(sticks her  
head in)

Dr. Benton, we have a policeman  
coming in with gunshot wound to  
the lower extremity.

BENTON

Put him in room two, notify X-ray,  
I'll be right there.

Meanwhile he has been taking out a suture kit.

BENTON

Now, here's all your stuff. Ask  
the patient if she's allergic to  
locals or any drug. This is  
Lidocaine but say Novocaine,  
they've heard of that. You have  
to ask, it's malpractice if you  
don't. You allergic to Novocaine?

HARPER

(hasn't been listening)

What's that?

BENTON

Novocaine, like at the dentist.

HARPER

My teeth are okay.

BENTON

I know, but are you allergic to  
Novocaine? No reactions, rashes,  
anything?

(CONTINUED)



36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

HARPER  
 (as if it  
 were obvious)  
 No, of course not.

BENTON  
 Fine. Now you inject both sides  
 of the wound, expelling as you go,  
 now you have to put on gloves by  
 yourself, sterile. You know how  
 to put on gloves? No? Great.

37 SCREAMING INFANT

37

perhaps fourteen months old, bellowing. Ross writhes  
 and twists, trying to peer into the kid's ear with his  
 otoscope.

ROSS  
 And he tugged on his ear all  
 night?

MOTHER (O.S.)  
 He was pulling on it, yes.

ROSS  
 Aaaah... there it is, nice and  
 red...  
 (straightening)  
 He has otitis media, we'll give  
 him a shot and he'll be fine.

As Ross straightens, the CAMERA SEES the MOTHER, in her  
 late twenties and very pretty.

ROSS  
 (to Haleh)  
 I want a hundred units procaine  
 pen G for this fellow...  
 (to Mother)  
 ... he should be fine by tonight,  
 if he's not better by morning,  
 give me a call, okay? Nice to  
 see you. Bye, Tiger.

And he's gone from the room.

MOTHER  
 He's very handsome.

HALEH  
 He knows it.

38

INT. HALLWAY

38

Ross strolls down, hands in pockets, smiling at everyone. He sees an attractive young woman, TRACY YOUNG, in a white coat, and smiles more broadly as she comes up to him.

YOUNG

Dr. Ross?

He can't believe his good fortune.

ROSS

At your service.

YOUNG

(shaking hands)

I'm Tracy Young, your third year student.

ROSS

(all charm)

Well, hi, Tracy Young, nice to meet you. For the next few weeks, we'll be working closely together, so --

YOUNG

(crisply; dropping his hand)

Not that closely, Dr. Ross. But I'll do my best to help you out. Now, if you'll tell me what to do I'll get started...

ROSS

(wounded)

I'm just trying to be friendly...

YOUNG

(still crisp)

I have all the friends I need, thank you. Shall we get started?

39

INT. ADMITTING ROOM

39

JOHN ERVIN, a black man in worn overcoat sits with his hands in his lap; very proper, very rigid. Greene is talking with him.

GREENE

So this happened when you woke up?

ERVIN

Yes, when I got up from bed.

(CONTINUED)

GREENE

And are you still seeing double now?

ERVIN

No.

GREENE

How many fingers?

ERVIN

(correctly)

Three.

GREENE

How long did it last?

ERVIN

About an hour.

GREENE

You ever have trouble with your eyes before?

ERVIN

No, never.

GREENE

Did you have any pain while you were seeing double? Headache?

(Ervin shakes no)

Trouble with your balance? Funny taste in your mouth? Flashing spots before your eyes? Weakness in your arms or legs?

ERVIN

No, none of those things. No.

GREENE

Well, I'll tell you, Mr. Ervin, I can call a neurologist to go over you, but that'll cost you another two hundred dollars. If you don't have any symptoms now, I'd leave well enough alone. Come back if you have any further trouble.

ERVIN

(sudden anger)

You're just saying that because I'm black.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

GREENE

Mr. Ervin, I'm just trying to save you some money. You don't have insurance and --

ERVIN

-- You wouldn't talk like this if I wasn't black. You Jewish, right?

GREENE

(resigned, to Timmy)

Call a neuro consult for Mr. Ervin, cee-cee transient diplopia, and bill him.

At that moment, the ambulance doors swing open. A COP is wheeled in on a stretcher, his leg bloody. He is groaning with pain.

TIMMY

Room five, down and around.

HALEH

(coming up)

These are stat chemistries, phone them in, Timmy.

The chaos in the room is growing; Greene looks at his watch.

GREENE

Timmy, I'm going off the floor for a while. I promised my wife I'd go to an appointment...

TIMMY

(distracted)

Okay, fine...

(shouting)

Not there! Room five! Five!

GREENE

Get Beth to cover for me.

He walks through the waiting room, past people in the cheap metal chairs with ragged vinyl cushions. As he goes out, he passes A CONSTRUCTION WORKER pounding a Coke machine, and swearing. SIRENS build in the background.

40 INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - DAY

40

A large modern entrance. Greene crosses to the elevator bank.

41 INT. ELEVATORS 41

They are clean, wood-panelled. This is the private wing of the hospital. PATIENTS, all well-dressed. Greene tugs at his tie, suddenly feeling rumpled and grungy.

42 INT. HARRIS GROUP OFFICE 42

Contemporary, spacious offices in trendy post-modern style: purple and gray walls, lots of glass brick and Italian lamps. It looks incredibly rich. The PATIENTS waiting are expensively dressed in Armani; pimply teenage kids twirling car keys, etc. Soft soothing MUSIC: it's another world.

Greene goes up to the curving reception desk, where FOUR RECEPTIONISTS sit: one black, one white, one Asian, one Hispanic. All with beautiful skin.

GREENE

I'm Dr. Greene, I'm here to see  
Dr. Harris...

43 MOVING THROUGH THE OFFICE COMPLEX 43

Greene walks with MORT HARRIS, 60, who looks like a movie star in a two thousand dollar suit. He's ultra smooth. Spanking clean hallways crowded with white-suited AIDES.

HARRIS

We have our eleven treatment rooms along here... you see a lot of support staff, you won't waste valuable time on trivia.

(chuckles)

We like to keep our productivity up -- before the damn government starts messing in patient care... The office for our next associate's here...

Through an open door, a richly appointed office: 19th Century desk. Greene's impressed.

HARRIS

As junior man, you'd do all the calls and weekends for a year or so. Compensation, we start you at a hundred and twenty thousand a year, plus bonuses. Senior people make anywhere from two hundred up.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARRIS (CONT'D)

The group has a condo in Jamaica and another one in Aspen. Al Morgenstern says you're the sharpest guy the ER ever had, and you probably like the action. But this is a nice life, Richie. And we find the practice intellectually challenging, so we send our physicians to all the major conferences -- last year, Maui, Paris, Rome... We're proud to practice the best medicine we possibly can here.

They have come back to the main entrance, now arriving behind the curving reception desk. We see A LOT OF PEOPLE DOING BILLING.

GREENE

(mixed feelings)

Seems great...

HARRIS

You like it? We had Predock redesign it. We redesign every couple of years, keeps us looking fresh.

GREENE

Terrific...

Harris sees he's staring at the financial aspects of the office.

HARRIS

We're very efficient with billing.

(beat)

Everybody's got a family, my wife wants to shop, kids get older, you need private school, college... You've got to think of all that, Richie. ER's a young man's game. You think you're doing good, but... there's a lot to life. And a lot of responsibility. Think about it.

GREENE

I will.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED: (2)

43

HARRIS

You have time for lunch? We could go to the Crown Club... They've got a great porcini pasta, no oil...

GREENE

I've got to get back.

HARRIS

(shaking hands)

Maybe next week. Think about this, Richie. We'd love to have you. Oh, Mrs. McCormick, how are you?

(he moves to her)

I thought the Field Museum ball went beautifully, you must be proud. Margo loved the flower arrangements...

Greene is abandoned, makes his own way out. At the door, he pauses, and looks back a moment at the elegant tranquility.

44 INT. ER PATIENT AREA

44

NOISY and chaotic, a babble of VOICES and ACCENTS. Greene enters, back in the thick of it. He goes to the desk, gets the next file, comes back to an elderly Polish woman. She has her GRANDCHILD on the floor, playing with a plastic Ninja sword.

GREENE

Mrs. Kosinski? I'm Dr. Greene.  
What's your problem?

The kid repeatedly whacks Greene on the legs with the sword.

GREENE

Mrs. Kosinski?  
(to kid)  
Would you stop that?

GRANDCHILD

No. You can't make me.

GREENE

Would you ask him to stop it?  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

GREENE (CONT'D)

Mrs. Kosinski? What's your  
problem?

The woman answers in rapid Polish. Greene blinks.

45 THE SUTURE ROOM

45

Benton and Carter working on the suture.

BENTON

Now, when you're tying off, make  
your sutures loose, because remember  
the tissues will swell over the  
next forty-eight hours. I like to  
space 'em the way you see them here,  
and...

HALEH

... Dr. Benton, the policeman is  
here.

BENTON

Coming...  
(to Carter)  
You finish up.

Carter looks stricken. Benton strips off his gloves, and  
strides out. Carter picks up the needle holder and  
forceps.

CARTER

Now, this isn't going to hurt at  
all.

His hands start to shake as he begins working.

46 THE NEXT ROOM

46

Benton, striding into room where the Cop is writhing  
in pain.

BENTON

(heartily)  
I'm Dr. Benton. What have we here?

HALEH

(cuts away pants)  
This is officer Martin. He's got  
a gunshot injury to the medial  
calf.

(CONTINUED)



BENTON  
(bending over wound)  
How'd this happen, Mr. Martin?

MARTIN (COP)  
I did it.

BENTON  
(poking around wound)  
What'd you say?

MARTIN  
I said, I did it, I shot myself  
in the goddamned leg.

BENTON  
Oh. How'd that happen?

MARTIN  
Will you just fix it...? I had a  
fight with my wife.

BENTON  
(probing)  
That make sense... Can you wiggle  
your toes for me?

A solemn-faced boy of eight is sitting up on the cot. Ross stands to one side letting Tracy Young talk to the kid while the mother, SARAH LOGAN, a shrewish tense woman, hovers.

YOUNG  
(gently)  
Now what happened, Billy?

LOGAN  
His school sent him home, they  
said he vomited blood.

YOUNG  
Can you tell me how it happened,  
Billy?

LOGAN  
He's a very high-strung child,  
always has been, very tense, very  
nervous.

YOUNG  
How did it happen, Billy?

(CONTINUED)

LOGAN

They said it was right after he got to homeroom, right while they were having the morning announcements, he vomited blood.

YOUNG

(still gently)  
Mrs. O'Hara, would you wait outside while I examine Billy.

LOGAN

Why?

YOUNG

It's just a procedure.

LOGAN

I think I should be here, I'm worried about Billy, he needs me.

YOUNG

Please wait outside.

LOGAN

(exploding)  
Look, Doctor, I don't know who you think you are, but this is my son, and I want to be here with him, when he needs me. He's very high-strung.

Ross slides in, all charm.

ROSS

You're absolutely right, Mrs. O'Hara, you really love your son, I see that.

(steering her to door)

And you want him to be treated as quickly as possible, so it's best...

(they are at the door)

... if you'd just take a seat down there... and we'll be with you in just a few minutes.

She hesitates at the door, looking back at Billy, then leaves. Ross closes the door, returns to Billy.

ROSS

Charm's not all bad.

(to child)

Did you vomit blood, Billy?

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: (2)

47

The boy nods.

ROSS

Do you have any pain?

The boy nods.

ROSS

Can you point to the pain?

He points to his stomach.

ROSS

Have you ever vomited blood  
before?

The boy nods.

ROSS

Many times?

The boy nods. Ross turns to Young.

ROSS

First eight-year-old ulcer  
patient I've seen...

48 THE SUTURE ROOM

48

Carter's still working on the Woman's finger, humming a little to himself as he goes. Benton sticks his head in the door.

BENTON

Still here? What do you think  
you're doing, the Sistine Chapel?  
Finish her up and start an I.V. in  
room five.

Carter nods, and finishes the finger. He bandages it, stands. The housewife sits up, looks at the bandaged finger.

HARPER

Thank you, Doctor.

CARTER

You're very welcome.

He collects the junk and dumps it in the wastebasket, starts to leave.

(CONTINUED)

HARPER

When do I come back to have the stitches out?

CARTER

(has no idea)

Oh. Uh... uh... three weeks.

HARPER

When my son had stitches in his foot, they said ten days.

CARTER

Well, ten days, three weeks, anywhere in there, it'll be fine.

She leaves. Carter exits, crosses the hall, pushes open the swinging door, and enters with false heartiness.

CARTER

Good morning, I'm Dr. Carter, what seems to be the problem?

MARTIN

What does it look like? I shot myself in the leg.

CARTER

Well, uh, yes, we'll have you fixed up in no time...

MARTIN

... you guys all keep saying that...

CARTER

... but first we have to start a little IV.

MARTIN

I don't give a damn, just hurry it up.

CARTER

Yes, sir.

He goes to a side table, picks up equipment; he fumbles to put together the tubing, and the needle at the end, then he hangs the bottle from an I.V. stand and water spurts through the needle over Officer Martin's face.

CARTER

Oh, excuse me...

(CONTINUED)

The cop looks annoyed to the point of violence; Carter hastily closes the valve, then realizes he has an exposed sterile needle and he isn't ready to insert it; he has to put it somewhere, and he goes through some fumbling looping with the tubing to try and keep the needle from touching anything.

CARTER

(thinking aloud)

Now... an armboard... armboard...

(finds an armboard)

Tape.

He tears off two pieces with great expertise, but a third piece twists around, catching on his fingers. He works to get free.

MARTIN

(looking away)

I tell you, I felt like belting her in the mouth, I really did... and then I go and shoot myself in the leg...

CARTER

Well, these things happen, you know.

MARTIN

You must see a lot of stuff, working in a place like this.

CARTER

Oh, sure... All the time.

Finally free of the tape, he puts a tourniquet on the arm and picks up the hand to examine the veins. He looks at one side then the other, then the other side again. He really has no fucking idea what he's doing. The cop bunches his fists.

MARTIN

I wanted to kill her. Kill her!

CARTER

(sweating)

All right, now... You'll feel a little needle. Oh, wait a minute.

He has forgotten to swab the site with alcohol. He drops the needle, catches it, tears open the swab, uses it, trying all the while to keep his cool.

(CONTINUED)

The cop is not watching closely, but it's hard to miss the lack of assuredness.

MARTIN

Hey, Doc, don't mind my asking, but you ever done this before?

CARTER

Officer, I'd hate to tell you how often I've done this before.

The cop lies back, Carter makes ready.

CARTER

Now, you'll feel a little pinprick...

He makes his jab.

MARTIN

Ow!

CARTER

Oh, come on, now, that wasn't bad... but we missed the vein, try again...

He pulls out the needle, and blood spurts from the needle site. He quickly puts his finger over it, uses one of his pieces of tape to cover the hole.

MARTIN

(eyes closed)

Damn.

CARTER

Sorry...

MARTIN

I feel like a fool, shooting myself this way, I hope it doesn't get out, I mean, there's a professional thing with a patient and a doctor, where you don't tell what happened, right?

CARTER

Right. Professional relationship. I'll never tell.

(CONTINUED)

MARTIN

My wife's okay, we don't argue much, but sometimes...

(winces at  
needle prick)

I'm just glad I didn't kill her, with my temper...

CARTER

(sweating)

Afraid we missed again, have to try one more time, your veins are pretty tricky, has anybody told you that before? You have tough veins.

Carter tapes the third puncture site and moves around the bed with all his equipment. He's sweating. The cop looks at his pincushion arm reflectively.

MARTIN

Tough veins, huh? Everybody in my family's tough. Everybody in my family's a cop, y' know? And my wife, she has two brothers, one's a pharmacist, and the other one, he's studying to be a doctor.

Carter has set up, tourniquetted the other arm, swabbed the veins, and is ready to stick again.

CARTER

Uh huh...

MARTIN

My wife is a beautiful woman. I'm not proud to beat up a woman even if she asks for it, but sometimes... I'm just glad I didn't knock her through the wall and break her neck, you know?

CARTER

I got it.

(can't believe it)

I got it! Don't move. Don't move, don't move...

(tears tape)

It's in the vein, just don't move at all.

Not only does the cop not move his arm, he doesn't move a muscle of his body, only his eyes flick back and forth as he watches Carter work. Carter tapes the needle.

(CONTINUED)

CARTER

There you go, officer, you got an IV and everything's gonna be just fine, now. There.

MARTIN

Can I move?

CARTER

(adjusts drip)

Sure, move around, you're fine.

Cop moves, looks at his hand with the needle.

MARTIN

Huh.

CARTER

Well, that's all I can do for you for the moment, they'll be taking you to X-ray soon and then to surgery...

MARTIN

Surgery?

CARTER

Believe me, the worst is over.

A BURLY TOUGH WOMAN, 35, heavy makeup, bursts in.

MRS. MARTIN

Is my husband here? Oh, Johnny!

She rushes forward past Carter. Throws herself on him.

MRS. MARTIN

Oh, Johnny, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to do it, I don't know what happened, it just went off, I didn't mean to hurt you honest to God, I'm sorry...

(to Carter)

Is it really bad?

Carter's mouth falls open. He shuts it. The Woman blabbers and hugs the cop, who stares hard at Carter.

CARTER

He's going to be fine.

MARTIN

Professional. Right?

(CONTINUED)



48 CONTINUED: (6)

48

CARTER

You got it.

Carter leaves, going down the hallway, wiping his brow, toward the admitting area.

49 THE ADMITTING AREA

49

Greene talks to the Polish woman through an INTERPRETER. The clerk is on the phone.

INTERPRETER

She says it started yesterday.

GREENE

And was the urine pink, or bright red?

The Interpreter asks, and gets a reply.

INTERPRETER

She says, pink.

GREENE

Has her urine ever been brown?

While this questioning goes on, a cab driver comes in in considerable haste and goes to the emergency admitting desk. Timmy is on the phone; the CABBY taps him for his immediate attention. He has snow on his shoulders.

CABBY

Hey, buddy.

TIMMY

(into phone)

Just a minute. What is it?

CABBY

I got a lady pregnant in my cab outside.

TIMMY

I'm sorry, we don't do deliveries. You've got to take her to County.

(back into phone)

Now what was the enzyme?

CABBY

Hey man, she's gonna have a baby whether you deliver 'em or not.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

Greene, immersed in his Polish conversation, has apparently not heard the conversation with the Cabby, but he spins now, turns to Carter.

GREENE

Come on!

He races through ambulance doors, Carter follows. We HOLD ON the Polish Woman and her translator. The translator explains Greene had some pressing problem. The woman looks concerned.

50 EXT. EMERGENCY ENTRANCE - DAY - SNOW

50

A TAXI pulled up to the emergency entrance. Snow swirls in high wind. Orderlies, directed by Greene, are getting a BLACK PREGNANT WOMAN out of the cab and onto a rolling stretcher; the Woman is in the final stages of labor. Carter is overwhelmed by all the impressions, and all he can manage to say is:

CARTER

When did it start snowing?

GREENE

Come on, Doctor, help me here.

51 BACK INSIDE - TRACKING WITH GURNEY

51

Down a corridor, the Woman is wincing. Greene is at her head; Carter is pulling the gurney.

PREGNANT WOMAN

It's starting... I feel it coming...

GREENE

(to Cabot)

Hold in the head! She's delivering in the hallway.

CARTER

But...

GREENE

Put your hand between her legs and hold the head in!

Still rolling at a full clip, Carter reaches down with his hand between the Woman's legs and holds the head in.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

GREENE

(to Woman)

Pant like a dog, pant like a dog,  
that's it...

(to techs)

Room three...

(to Nurse)

Get anaesthesia, get me the  
pediatrician, set up the stirrups.

HATHAWAY

You doing an episiotomy?

GREENE

No time. She's crowned.

They wheel into a room, and everybody dashes off in all directions except Carter, who is left with his hand in the Woman's crotch, holding in the head. Greene washes at the sink.

CARTER

What should I do?

GREENE

Just what you're doing, Doctor.

The Woman screams again in contraction. A nurse comes in, and does a quickie draping. She sees snow on the Woman's overcoat.

HALEH

Is it snowing out there?

GREENE

(to Carter)

Now, when I'm scrubbed, I'll take over,  
and you scrub.

(to Haleh)

Where's anaesthesia?

HALEH

They're all called, Doctor; you  
want a gown?

GREENE

I'm gonna have to catch this one  
any way I can.

Ross enters the room, takes one look.

ROSS

No kidding.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (2)

51

ROSS (CONT'D)

(goes to Woman's  
side)

Okay, dear, you'll be fine, just  
pant, pant, that's right...  
good... Is it snowing?

CARTER

Yeah, it's snowing.

ROSS

Snowing on March seventeenth.  
This is ridiculous.

The Woman groans.

HALEH

It's okay, ma'am, you're gonna be  
fine.

Greene has slipped on a pair of gloves, and moves into  
the delivery area.

GREENE

(to Carter)

Okay, I got it.

Carter steps aside.

GREENE

Okay, here we go. Push on the  
next one...

He starts the delivery; Carter goes to the sink, but  
doesn't bother to scrub, he just watches, with the water  
running.

ANAESTHETIST

(entering)

Well, well, well...

The ANAESTHETIST goes to the Woman's head, and Ross goes  
to scrub.

ANAESTHETIST

Is it snowing?

GREENE

Head's clear, now the arm... ma'am,  
you've got a very beautiful little  
boy.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (3)

51

We hear the SOUND of an INFANT CRYING. The baby is placed in a towel in the nurse's hands.

GREENE

Clamp, please.

ANAESTHETIST

When did it start snowing?

Carter stares at the child, fascinated by the impromptu miracle he's just witnessed.

HALEH

What's your name, ma'am?

PREGNANT WOMAN

Ferguson.

HALEH

What's your first name, Mrs. Ferguson?

Carter stares. Sound fades. Everybody is doing what they do: Greene getting the placenta, the nurse talking to the mother, Ross cleaning the baby, the BABY CRYING. But it is still a miracle. Carter entranced, until --

BENTON

(sticking head in room)

Dr. Carter, you have three suture cases waiting for you in the back room. Get cracking. You're not on the medical service, these people don't need any help, they can botch it up on their own.

Carter, rousing himself from a reverie, leaves the room.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

52 IN THE LAB

52

looking at a slide under the microscope stage.

MALIK

You seen Dr. Ross?

LEWIS

No.

MALIK

They need him for a delivery in room three.

LEWIS

I'll tell him if I see him.

She peers for a moment, then looks off.

LEWIS

A delivery?

She shrugs, looks at the slide again.

53 INSERT - THE SLIDE

53

A microscopic view of little dot-like micro-organisms.

54 THE HALLWAY

54

Lewis passing Hathaway.

LEWIS

A million two of pen G for the gentleman in room four, and remind him he has to come back in two days.

HATHAWAY

Right.

Lewis keeps going, STAY WITH Hathaway as she goes to the medicine cabinet, unlocks it with a key she carries on a ribbon around her neck, and plucks out the penicillin. She fills a syringe.

GOLDMAN

Hey, Barb, are we out of oral ampicillin?

(CONTINUED)

HATHAWAY

(not looking)

Yeah, we ordered some yesterday.  
Call down again.

HALEH

Hey, Barb, Dr. Ross wants to know  
if we have any P.K.U. cards.

HATHAWAY

Tell him no, he'll have to try and  
get a blue-top from the baby.

HALEH

He says he can't get it.

HATHAWAY

Try calling chemistry, they may  
have some in the lab, but he's  
probably got to get a tube one  
way or another.

MALIK

Hey, Barb, they're complaining in  
the doctors' lounge that they're  
out of coffee again.

HATHAWAY

Then tell them...

She breaks off, utterly exasperated, and then dismisses  
the Orderly with a wave of the hand.

HATHAWAY

I'm tied up.

MOVING VERTICALLY DOWN a VIEW of a leg. Radiologist  
dictates:

RADIOLOGIST (O.S.)

Patient Martin, Jonathan, AO45337,  
anterior and lateral right lower  
extremity. Femur, articulation,  
patella, tibia and fibula all  
appear normal. There is a density  
in the musculature of the lateral  
calf measuring...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RADIOLOGIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(uses a ruler)

... approximately one centimeter by one centimeter, consistent with a foreign body, and there is local edema of the surrounding tissues.

PAN OFF the X-ray to A RADIOLOGIST. Benton standing impatiently.

BENTON

A bullet, that's what you'd call it, a bullet.

RADIOLOGIST

(unhurried)

There is no apparent fragmentation of the foreign body, and distal portions of the tibia and fibula appear...

BENTON

Come on, come on...

RADIOLOGIST

... within normal limits. Impression: foreign body in the right extremity consistent with possible bullet.

BENTON

Thank you very much.  
(taking films)

You mind if I take these? We have a guy with a bullet in his leg and he'd like to go to the O.R. and have it out.

RADIOLOGIST

You rush, you make mistakes, you miss things.

BENTON

A philosopher...

Benton leaves. The Radiologist raises his fist in an Italian fuck-you, puts up the next set of films:

RADIOLOGIST

Patient Ellison, Martha, number GL23670, A.P. and lateral plain skull views. There is no evidence of fracture and no density changes consistent with...



Greene talking on the wall phone.

GREENE

That's right, we had a U.A. and a sed rate, the patient is Sarah Morton. M-O-R... What do you mean? We sent it to you an hour ago. An hour ago. Come on, don't give me that, it's twelve o'clock and that was a stat determination. Well, do you have the sed rate? What're you doing down there, picking your noses?

A man is wheeled past on a stretcher. On Greene's questioning look:

HALEH

Chest pain two hours, question A.M.I.

Greene nods. Back to phone:

GREENE

I'll talk to you any goddamn way I want to, if I send you a stat chemistry I want it within the hour and not sometime next month ... yeah, well, we're busy, too.

Hangs up irritably, looks at Malik.

GREENE

It's not even lunchtime. Wait'll they start going to lunch. That's when they really slow down.

Greene surveys ten people waiting to be examined.

GREENE

Who's in bad shape, Timmy?

TIMMY

Lady on the right, passed out in the library, her record shows heart history.

GREENE

Okay. Somebody got that A.M.I. just came in?

(CONTINUED)

TIMMY

Lewis.

Greene takes a record, goes over to the lady.

GREENE

Hello, I'm Doctor Greene. What seems to be the trouble...

(reading chart)

Mrs. O'Rourke?

CONFUSED WOMAN

I'm not Mrs. O'Rourke.

GREENE

Mrs. O'Rourke?

A woman at another side raises her hand; she's late fifties, timid.

MRS. O'ROURKE

Here.

Greene shoots Timmy a look; Timmy shrugs.

GREENE

I'm Dr. Greene. Tell me what happened.

MRS. O'ROURKE

(terrified  
understatement)

I just got to feel faint, is all.

GREENE

(thumbing chart)

You're a librarian, Mrs. O'Rourke?

MRS. O'ROURKE

Yes, at the museum, I work there.

GREENE

Did you pass out?

MRS. O'ROURKE

Yes.

GREENE

And what were you doing at the time?

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: (2)

57

MRS. O'ROURKE  
Sitting at the late books desk,  
same as always.

GREENE  
This has happened to you before?

She nods, slowly, obviously very tense; they both understand an implication we do not.

MRS. O'ROURKE  
They say I have bones in my heart.  
That's what the last doctor told me.

GREENE  
Uh-huh...  
(feels her neck)  
Mrs. O'Rourke, I want a specialist  
to see you, you just wait here.  
(to Timmy)  
Get a cardiology consult here for  
an A.S. with a history of syncope  
at rest.

Mrs. O'Rourke overhears this with a worried look.

GREENE  
I just said that something's  
wrong with one of the valves of  
your heart, and we want a  
specialist to look at you.

MRS. O'ROURKE  
Will I have to have an operation?

GREENE  
Well, Mrs. O'Rourke, you have a  
condition where calcium is  
forming on one of your heart  
valves. One of the ways to treat  
it is with surgery, but let's  
wait and see, all right?

MRS. O'ROURKE  
I don't want an operation.

GREENE  
Let's wait and talk about that  
after the specialists have seen  
you, all right?

She seems to be calmed by this, and nods.

CUT TO:

Benton palpitating an abdomen.

BENTON

Breathe in... now out, easy...  
good. Now... breathe deep, good,  
any pain there? Good...

In the b.g., Carter sticks his head in.

CARTER

Everybody's sewn up. What do you  
want me to do?

BENTON

Go to lunch.

CARTER

I'm okay, I can help out if you  
have anything you want me to...

BENTON

(to patient)

Excuse me a minute.

He goes over to Carter at the door, and says, rather  
fiercely:

BENTON

Don't be a hero. If I tell you  
to lunch, you go. You may not be  
hungry, but it's a long time to  
dinner, and we may be too busy  
then to stop and eat. You never  
know how long you'll have to go  
until your next meal, so when you  
can, eat. Now get the hell out  
of here.

Carter turns to leave.

BENTON

And don't be gone longer than  
half an hour!

He resumes his palpitation

BENTON

Now, deep breathe... any  
tenderness there? No? Good...

CUT TO:

## 59 THE TV IMAGE IN THE WAITING ROOM

59

Showing the St. Patrick's Day parade, stately in the snow.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And here is Senator Carol Mosley Braun, riding in the float, oops, she almost lost her balance there...

## 60 AN EXAMINING ROOM

60

Young hears SCREAMING, looks in and sees five people clustered around a YOUNG BOY who is shouting with pain and drug-induced agitation. Lewis rushes in.

YOUNG

What is it?

LEWIS

Crack dealer. He took five shots from an Uzi.

YOUNG

He looks like a kid.

LEWIS

Twelve. He might make it.

The door slams as she goes in. The kid is shrieking "Bastard, bastard" and they push him back down. Haleh comes banging out.

HALEH

Call security.

YOUNG

Why?...

HALEH

They think the other gang members may come and try to finish him off.

As Young starts to dial, Benton comes running in, goes through the door.

BENTON (O.S.)

Okay! Okay! Everybody calm, let's go!

## 61 ADMITTING DESK

61

TIMMY

E.R... Yeah, yeah, okay.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

TIMMY (CONT'D)  
 (to Hathaway)  
 Tell the surgeons we have a  
 motorcycle accident coming in.  
 Kid wasn't wearing a helmet, they  
 say it's pretty bad.

HATHAWAY  
 Terrific.

62 A SMUG-LOOKING FOUR YEAR OLD BOY

62

sitting on a cot with his hands crossed over his chest.

ROSS  
 When did he do it?

KAREN  
 An hour ago.

ROSS  
 Has there been any complaints of  
 pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea,  
 anything?

KAREN  
 No, he just sits there, looking smug.

ROSS  
 Why did he swallow it?

KAREN  
 I don't know, he just got his  
 hands on it and swallowed it.

ROSS  
 Jimmy, why'd you swallow it?

CHILD  
 Because.

KAREN  
 You see, he's impossible.

Young comes in. Slaps up a film.

YOUNG  
 Here's the plain abdominal.

It shows, clearly, the abdomen of a child, where amid  
 lacy intestines is the shaply defined silhouette of a  
 doorkey.

(CONTINUED)

ROSS

Well, there it is, all right.

KAREN

You mean that's where it is? In his stomach?

ROSS

You said he swallowed it.

KAREN

What do I do now?

ROSS

Check his stools, Mrs. Edmunds. He will probably pass it.

KAREN

That's not what I mean. I mean, how do I get into my house? I'm locked out.

ROSS

You don't have another key?

Despite himself, he starts to laugh. So does the culprit, Jimmy.

KAREN

It's not funny!

ROSS

I know, I'm sorry...

KAREN

Now I'll have to call his father.

Benton, leaning up against wall in fatigue. A body is rolled out, covered in a sheet. The kid didn't make it. Hathaway passes.

HATHAWAY

Cheer up, Doctor, it's only three o'clock.

BENTON

Three o'clock. Why do I do this? I must be crazy.

HATHAWAY

(not looking back)  
That's a very good insight.

## 64 ADMITTING SECTION

64

Ross walks past the admitting section, where a couple of patients are arriving, shaking off water, and closing their umbrellas.

ROSS

When did it start raining?

Nobody answers him, and he goes directly into the doctor's lounge.

## 65 THE DOCTOR'S LOUNGE

65

It is, if anything, messier than it was before, and the TV is still ON. Also a RADIO, it's NOISY here, but there is still a quieter feeling than the chaos outside.

ROSS

(announcing)

It's raining.

GREENE

(writing report)

It has been for an hour.

Ross glances up at the TV as he sits to write some reports.

GREENE

How's your new student?

ROSS

Very capable. Tough.

GREENE

(busy writing)

Uh-huh...

ROSS

I hear you went up to Harris's today.

GREENE

Have you seen that office? It looks like a nightclub or something.

ROSS

Socialite doctor... He offer you a job?

(CONTINUED)



GREENE

Yeah. But I think I'd have to go to a lot of charity balls.

ROSS

Jennifer'd like that. Lot of money, all that.

GREENE

Yeah. Jennifer'd like that.

ROSS

You don't sound enthusiastic.

GREENE

(shrug)

I don't know...

ROSS

Jennifer wants you to take it?

GREENE

Yeah...

Neither man looks at the other; they are writing in charts, flipping pages, checking things.

ROSS

By the way, what's this I hear about you and that tech on surgical four.

GREENE

I'm a married man.

ROSS

So?

GREENE

So I don't know what you heard, but it's not true.

ROSS

She's seriously cute.

GREENE

Yes.

ROSS

But you're faithful to your wife?

GREENE

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2)

65

ROSS

Why do you do that?

GREENE

Because I'm too tired to do anything else.

In the banter, there is no way of knowing whether that's the truth or not.

66 ADMITTING DESK

66

Benton is leaning over it, fatigued, talking to Timmy.

BENTON

I heard something about a motorcycle case?

TIMMY

The state police called it in but he never showed. Maybe D.O.A. You looking for something to do?

BENTON

Yeah, I thought maybe we could play a little chess, you and me.

TIMMY

Well...

(as PHONE RINGS)

E.R. Yes, yes, Dr. Lewis is here, I'll have her paged.

Benton wanders off. Around the corner comes frail, ELDERLY MAN who looks like a cough would knock him to his knees. He wears a blue uniform and a gun.

ELDERLY MAN

Somebody call for hospital security?

67 LEWIS

67

with a thin male patient, PARKER, dressed in hardhat clothing, but incongruous for his emaciation.

LEWIS

We'll know more when we have the X-rays. How much do you smoke?

PARKER

Three packs a day. All my life.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

LEWIS

You really should stop that.

Her BEEPER GOES OFF.

LEWIS

Excuse me.

68 IN THE HALLWAY

68

where she picks up a wallphone and dials.

LEWIS

Hello, Dr. Lewis... Oh, hi.  
Listen, I can't talk to you at  
work unless... it is?

(looks at watch)

Well, what... no, I'm on all  
night... I get off tomorrow night  
at six... I thought we've broken  
up... Paul, come on...

While she's on the phone, an orderly comes and hands her  
an X-ray. She holds it up to the light.

LEWIS

Damn... What? No, no, not you,  
it's just I have to tell a  
patient something... Is  
everything all right? I'm sorry,  
but... Okay. 'Bye.

She hangs up, and then stops, and puts her head against  
the wall by the phone. She's very tired. She stays that  
way for a few moments, an uncomfortably long time for us  
as an audience, and then she holds the X-ray up to the  
light again, lowers her hand, and enters the room.

LEWIS

We have the X-rays, Mr. Parker.  
(slapping them up)  
You can see there is a density in  
the left upper quadrant, here.

PARKER

What does that mean?

LEWIS

It means there is something  
abnormal within the structure  
of your lung.

(CONTINUED)

PARKER

Something in my lung...

LEWIS

Yes, that's right.

PARKER

What?

LEWIS

Well, it could be any number of things. It could be an infiltrate... that is, a dense area of tissue from an old infection, it could be an inhaled foreign body, it could be a granuloma of some sort. It could be a lot of things.

Lewis is feeling the patient out, trying to see how much he wants to hear.

PARKER

And what do you think it is?

LEWIS

There's no way to know without surgery. You'll have to undergo exploratory surgery to know for sure.

PARKER

What do you think in the meantime?

LEWIS

I think, in the meantime, that you should consider it a potentially serious finding, but not worry about it until we have more information.

PARKER

Doctor, I eat like a horse, look at me, I'm losing weight.

LEWIS

I know that.

PARKER

You're saying I got cancer.

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

I'm not saying that. I am saying we do not know anything for sure.

PARKER

(long pause)

Look, Doctor, I'm forty-seven years old, I got a wife and three kids, I got a house that's not paid for, I got a job, I got a father... my mother's dead... I got a lot of responsibilities and things. And I want to know what you think.

LEWIS

I think you should regard your condition as very serious, but you should await a final determination.

PARKER

You afraid to tell me the truth?

LEWIS

I'm only afraid that you will misinterpret what I say. Your history of coughing blood, weight loss, and this X-ray is suggestive of cancer, but the diagnosis is not confirmed and it may very well be something else, and none of us should jump to any conclusions until we know. That's what I think.

PARKER

(another long beat)

How long do I have?

LEWIS

(a long appraising look)

Six months to a year.

PARKER

Do I have six months, for sure?

LEWIS

No, not for sure.

(CONTINUED)

PARKER

The reason I ask is, I was always going to take my wife to Nassau, it was what we always talked about, only we never did it. I just thought...

(shrugs)

... Spring is coming, you know, it's getting too late to go to Nassau. She always wanted a suntan in winter, to show off to the neighbors.

LEWIS

I understand.

PARKER

I guess I better go. I mean, it'll be summer, almost before you know it.

He gets off the couch.

PARKER

(extending hand)

Thank you, Doctor, for all your help. For being straight.

She shakes his hand; he bursts into tears, and starts to hug her. She hugs him back, and allows him to cry. She is, herself, affected, but in a peculiar way... partly there, and partly cut-off.

LEWIS

Mr. Parker, if there's one thing you learn in my job, it's that nothing is certain. Nothing that seems very bad, and nothing that seems very good. Nothing is certain. Nothing.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

69 THE ER ENTRANCE

69

MRS. RASKIN, 60, elaborately coiffed, wearing a fur coat, sweeps into the ER -- an actress making an entrance.

MRS. RASKIN  
(a Bette Davis delivery)  
Good evening.

TIMMY  
How's it going tonight, Mrs.  
Raskin?

MRS. RASKIN  
I have a problem that requires  
medical attention.

TIMMY  
See Dr. Greene, he's on duty  
tonight.  
(as PHONE RINGS)  
E.R., yeah, hold on. Now what was  
the amylase? Okay, and you have  
anything else? A cortisol?

MRS. RASKIN  
Oh, Dr. Greene, how nice.

She drifts across the room, where Greene talks to another  
RESIDENT, leaning against a wall, sipping coffee from a  
Styrofoam cup.

RESIDENT  
So he shows up, right, get this,  
he shows up with a S.G.O.T. which  
is off the charts, and an L.D.H.  
which can't be measured, and he  
has a liver hanging down to his  
knees, and he says...

MRS. RASKIN  
Good evening, Dr. Greene.

RESIDENT  
... he doesn't drink, that he  
works in a dry cleaning plant, and  
the stupid intern goes for it,  
see? Now Corman shows up on the  
floor, and he takes one look...

(CONTINUED)

MRS. RASKIN

I require medical attention, Dr. Greene.

GREENE

(to Resident)

Just a second. What is it, Mrs. Raskin?

MRS. RASKIN

(holds out hand)

I have this troublesome hangnail.

GREENE

Mrs. Raskin...

MRS. RASKIN

I think it may be infected.

GREENE

Mrs. Raskin, if we treat you, it'll cost you one hundred eighty dollars, you know that. You can cut your own hangnail for a hundred eighty dollars, can't you?

MRS. RASKIN

I wish you'd do it for me.

She links her arm in his.

MRS. RASKIN

You're such a nice young doctor. I do appreciate your taking the time to look after me.

GREENE

We'll handle this in the lab.

MRS. RASKIN

Oh, the lab, I've never been in your lab.

MRS. RASKIN

Gracious, look at all of this, I had no idea how complicated it was.

(CONTINUED)



GREENE

Please take a seat.

(to Malik)

I'm excising Mrs. Raskin's  
hangnail.

MALIK

I'll stand back.

MRS. RASKIN

Well, at my age, you can't be too  
careful. You look tired, Dr.  
Greene. How have you been?

GREENE

(getting scissors)

Fine, thanks.

MRS. RASKIN

And how is your wife? Still  
studying for her bar exam?

GREENE

Yeah. It's next month. We don't  
see much of each other. Alcohol.  
May feel a little cool.

A girl comes into the lab. Seriously cute.

GIRL (LEE)

Richie, listen, can we talk? It's  
important.

GREENE

I'm with a patient now, Lee.

LEE

Meet me for dinner?

GREENE

I'll try. You know how it is  
here.

LEE

Call me.

She's gone. Mrs. Raskin has missed nothing.

MRS. RASKIN

Very cute. She works here, in the  
hospital?

GREENE

Fourth floor.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (2)

70

MRS. RASKIN

Did I tell you that my sister is remarried?

GREENE

No.

MRS. RASKIN

Oh, yes. She's just remarried to a nice man in real estate in Dover. How long has it been since I've seen you?

GREENE

Just a week or so, Mrs. Raskin. Now here we go... Ready?

MRS. RASKIN

Don't make such a fuss.

But she's smiling. He cuts the hangnail. She pats his arm.

MRS. RASKIN

Thank you, Dr. Greene. Now be a good boy, and go home to your wife.

71 A WALL CLOCK

71

Reads seven P.M., and PULLING BACK from it, we see the day shift getting ready to leave. The Admitting Clerk shrugs into an overcoat, and says to Goldman:

TIMMY

Another day, another dollar.

GOLDMAN

Good night, Timmy.

CUT TO:

Several fresh NURSES coming in the door, and several on the last shift leaving, putting on hats and coats.

CUT TO:

72 BENTON IN THE HALLWAY

72

walking away FROM us, Miss Hathaway TOWARD us.

(CONTINUED)

BENTON

Miss Hathaway, will you get me  
a...

HATHAWAY

Sorry.

BENTON

(glancing at watch)  
You off?

HATHAWAY

I sure am.

BENTON

See you tomorrow. Good night.

HATHAWAY

Good night.

She walks on. PAN TO two nurses in conversation, Haleh  
and a night nurse, Woodward.

HALEH

In three there's a lady with  
pulmonary edema, she gets lasex by  
straight push, and a morphine  
drip. In four there's some kid, I  
don't know about him, Dr. Ross is  
looking after him; five, there're  
two patients, a question A.M.I.  
and a question pulmonary infarcts,  
labs are coming on both of them,  
in six there's an old guy who's  
drunk and puts his hand up your  
skirt, watch out for him, and in  
seven, I can't remember. You get  
all that?

WOODWARD

Where's the guy who puts his hand  
up your skirt?

HALEH

Six. I have to get home, four  
people for dinner.

WOODWARD

What're you making?

HALEH

Pot roast. If my son remembered  
to turn on the oven after school.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (2)

72

Miss Hathaway, locking up the medicine chest. Just as she does so, Malik comes up.

MALIK

Can you give me two grams of chloramphenicol?

HATHAWAY

Sorry, I'm late. Next shift will give it to you.

She turns and goes down the hall, passing another NURSE, an older black woman, OLIGARIO, who also has a key around her neck.

HATHAWAY

He needs two grams of chloramphenicol.

Oligario sighs, APPROACHING.

OLIGARIO

Coming right up.

Hathaway, passing the admitting desk. A new clerk, JERRY, is taking over from Timmy. The PHONE RINGS; he answers it and simultaneously waves good night to the Nurse.

JERRY

E.R... I see, when is it coming in? All right, we'll be ready for her.

Hathaway leaves, and the ambulance doors swing after her.

73 DOCTOR'S LOUNGE

73

Lewis slumps in a chair. She stares into space.

What she sees: an X-ray board, on which are displayed several X-rays of a young infant, curled in a fetal position, almost.

Lewis, sighing, turning away. She gets coffee, yawns, and turns UP the RADIO.

74 THE CAFETERIA

74

Greene and Lee.

(CONTINUED)

GREENE

I think you're great, too, Lee,  
but if I meet you later on  
upstairs... you know that one  
thing will lead to another...

LEE

I get so excited thinking about  
it...

GREENE

Yeah, but you see, I'm married,  
and if I start screwing around on  
my wife...

LEE

I get so hot... thinking of you...

GREENE

Eee, yeah... uh...  
(BEEPER GOES OFF)  
Just a minute.

LEE

Come on, take a chance.

GREENE

Right back.

Greene goes to the wall phone. Lee watches him. Greene  
looks stunned, hangs up, comes back.

GREENE

I got to go.

LEE

But...

GREENE

Talk later.

A pretty, delicate virginal GIRL of perhaps 13. She is  
being interviewed by Carter. The Girl is sitting  
upright.

CARTER

Now, you know that it is possible  
to become pregnant without actual  
penetration, I mean, just be  
fooling around.

(CONTINUED)

75

CONTINUED:

75

GIRL

I'm not pregnant.

CARTER

It's very important that you tell me if you have any reason to think you might be pregnant.

GIRL

No reason.

CARTER

Because if you are pregnant, you have what we call an ectopic pregnancy, and you have to be operated on immediately. It's a matter of life and death for you, and I'm not exaggerating.

GIRL

(calm)

No, I'm not pregnant.

CUT TO:

76

THE HALLWAY

76

Benton and Carter.

CARTER

She denies pregnancy, and she has guarding and tenderness in the left lower quadrant.

BENTON

How old is she?

CARTER

Thirteen.

BENTON

And she has left quadrant pain and she's not pregnant. Uh-uh. Right.

He enters the examining room; the CAMERA FOLLOWS.

BENTON

Hello, Miss Murphy, I'm Dr. Benton. Now tell me, how long has it been since your last period?

(CONTINUED)

GIRL

I don't know.

BENTON

Think back, just tell me roughly.

GIRL

It was after Christmas.

BENTON

So it's been a couple of months?

GIRL

I guess so, I haven't paid attention.

BENTON

(confident)

And you have had sexual intercourse.

GIRL

Yes.

BENTON

(to Carter)

You have an ectopic pregnancy, Dr. Carter, and she'd better be scheduled for surgery.

Benton strides out of the room. Carter is dumbfounded, stares at the Girl. The Girl looks blankly at him.

77

THE ADMITTING OFFICE

77

where a number of hospital personnel are beginning to cluster, waiting and talking quietly.

78

THE DOCTOR'S LOUNGE

78

Greene, drinking coffee. Lewis enters.

GREENE

Did you hear?

LEWIS

I heard. She arrived yet?

Greene shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

LEWIS

It's incredible.

She gets coffee, turns and glances at TV set.

LEWIS

I wonder what happened.

Greene shakes his head.

79 IN EXAMINING ROOM

79

Ross sewing up a child's forehead.

ROSS

How'd he do this?

FATHER

She let him out of the house and he slipped on some ice.

MOTHER

You were the one who didn't lock the door.

FATHER

What're you talking about? I locked the door same as always when I got home, you opened it again for your little evening chat with Mrs. Emerson --

MOTHER

I what?

FATHER

-- And you forgot to lock up...

MOTHER

... Now just one minute, Jim, just one little minute...

Ross has been watching the child's face, his concern as his parents argue.

ROSS

... Take it easy, folks. Your son is going to be fine.

Chagrined, they fall silent. SIRENS BUILD in b.g.



SIRENS WHINING, and Greene comes through the swinging doors, waving his arms.

GREENE

Okay, okay, break it up, there's lots to do around here, get back to work.

The crowd doesn't disperse much.

GREENE

Come on. What do you expect to see?

He is clearly angry. A stretcher rolls through the door wheeled by two orderlies and passes behind him, going down the hallway. On the stretcher is Hathaway. She is gray; her eyes shut. The waiting group reacts.

GREENE

Come on, everybody get back to work!

He hurries after the stretcher; follows it into a room. He closes the door.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

81      INSIDE THE ROOM

81

The blanket is whipped off Hathaway, who wears a print blouse and dark slacks. Greene directs the group working over her. At the head of the stretcher is her ROOMMATE in street clothes, sobbing.

GREENE

Come on, get her clothes off, let's go.

(to sobbing girl)

You know what she took?

ROOMMATE

No, she just went into the medicine cabinet... she had a lot of stuff around...

GREENE

You have no idea what she might have taken?

While he talks, he is examining her face, checking the pupils. Others are scissoring off the clothing, and drawing bloods.

GREENE

Get that serum barbiturate right away, take it down to the lab yourself. Get her on wall oxygen at ten liters.

PEREZ (NURSE)

You want to pump her?

GREENE

Not this way, she's totally unresponsive. We'll hook her on a renal unit. Call neuro, call the nursing supervisor. Does her family know?

ROOMMATE

I don't know her family. We were only roommates three weeks.

GREENE

What do you do?

(CONTINUED)

ROOMMATE

I'm a nurse.

WOODWARD

Why'd she do it?

GREENE

(cutting in)

It doesn't matter why she did it.  
You don't ask that about any other  
O.D. that comes through these doors  
and don't ask it about this one.

He looks over his shoulder. A lot of curious faces are  
peering in through the open door.

GREENE

Shut the door.

He is slipping on his stethoscope.

GREENE

Is the kidney machine coming?

PEREZ

It's been ordered.

GREENE

That's not what I asked. I want a  
blood gas monitor and electrolytes  
qh, now do it. We got an I.V.  
going? How hypotensive is she?

WOODWARD

Eighty over sixty.

PEREZ

You want bemigrade?

GREENE

Not unless I know what she took.  
(to girl)  
Did she drink it all?

ROOMMATE

Yes... she had a Scotch...

GREENE

More than one?

ROOMMATE

I don't know... maybe... I don't  
know...

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

81

GREENE

Well, listen, if this ever happens again, remember to bring in any possible pills. Even if you have to clear the whole medicine cabinet, because right now we don't have any idea what she took, and we have to wait for the lab, and the lab... Where's the goddamn I.V.? Why is everybody standing around? Let's do the arterial stick. She got a Babinski?

PEREZ

(at feet)

Yeah, positive.

GREENE

How's the oxygen?

WOODWARD

Ten liters and running.

GREENE

I don't think...

He shakes his head, looking at her, and lapses into silence. The girl is still gray. Lewis slips into the room.

LEWIS

The chief of service is outside ... Her serum barb is four hundred milligrams per millileter...

GREENE

(frowning)

Is it a mistake?

LEWIS

(shaking head)

Repeated twice.

82 THE HALLWAY

82

Greene huddles with a grim-faced Morgenstern, who wears a tuxedo. Morgenstern's aerobicized GIRLFRIEND in the b.g.

(CONTINUED)

GREENE

(low, confidential)

She's cyanotic, pupils are dilated, pressure of ninety over seventy, she's in Cheyne-Stokes respirations and we just got her barbiturate level at four hundred milligrams...

Morgenstern winces, shakes his head.

GREENE

No other lab values yet. I've got her on oxygen by mask and we're hydrating and getting ready to go onto the kidney machine. I don't have anything on renal function yet.

MORGENSTERN

Babinski?

GREENE

She's got a Babinski and all her reflexes are down. But we haven't got any history. We don't know what she took, or why.

MORGENSTERN

She seemed okay today...

GREENE

Yeah, perfectly all right, all day long, happy, enthusiastic...

There is a long pause. A TEENAGE GIRL, sobbing on a stretcher, her foot bloody, is wheeled past.

MORGENSTERN

Four hundred milligrams. You know the question: should we be trying to do this?

GREENE

Well, I agree, it's not hopeful. But we have a big morale problem around here, I think we have to try everything we can...

He has been very calm, very professional, and suddenly he winces as if he had a stomach cramp, bites his lip.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: (2)

82

MORGENSTERN

The unit's going to be looking  
to you, Richie.

GREENE

Yeah... yes, sir, I'm fine.  
Really...

Suddenly, he pulls himself together abruptly. Morgenstern  
watching closely.

GREENE

I'm fine, I think we're all fine.

MORGENSTERN

Call me if there's any change.  
Any change at all.

Morgenstern leaves. He leans his head against the wall.  
Benton comes over. There is a momentary silence.

GREENE

Don't ask me. I don't know why.  
Nobody knows why.

BENTON

What's the serum level?

GREENE

Four hundred.

BENTON

Boy, she really did it, didn't  
she.

GREENE

Yeah, she really did. There's no  
way we can touch her.

Greene pushes away from the wall, and goes back into  
the room.

Benton remains standing there, looking at the door with  
the little window in it. Through the little window, he  
sees just white figures moving back and forth around the  
bed, which is below view. He just stands there. Then  
his BEEPER GOES OFF. He turns away from the door, and  
picks up phone.

83 THE SUTURE ROOM

83

A teenage girl, SUZANNE, hysterically sobbing, she sits  
upright while Carter works on her foot.

(CONTINUED)

CARTER

Come on, now, it can't be that bad.

SUZANNE

You don't know...

CARTER

It's a very minor cut. You're hardly going to get three stitches.

SUZANNE

... it's not that, it's not the cut, he could care less about the cut...

CARTER

... Who?

SUZANNE

My father. I smashed up the car.

CARTER

Oh.

SUZANNE

I wasn't supposed to drive it, and I took the keys, and I smashed it up, and it was brand new, and he loves that car...

CARTER

Well, it may not be as bad as you think...

SUZANNE

He'll kill me!

CARTER

Oh, I don't think...

SUZANNE

... You don't know him, he loves that car, and now I took it...

Carter sews a moment in silence.

SUZANNE

It was a brand new Cadillac.  
(sobbing more)  
... with air conditioning and power steering...

Carter says nothing.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: (2)

83

SUZANNE

He'll kill me. It was the first  
new car he ever had.

84 THE ADMITTING AREA

84

A burly man in his late fifties, DAD, comes charging through the ambulance doors; he is a study in fury. The admitting clerk is talking to two people at once, an elderly white woman with a cane, and a very thin black man. The Burly Man charges up.

DAD

Where's my daughter?

JERRY

... Just take a seat...

DAD

(shouting)

Where the hell is my daughter?

JERRY

Look, mister, you'll have to wait  
your turn here.

(turns to others)

Now the doctors will see you.  
It's very busy tonight, and...

The Burly Man goes charging off to a seat, almost sits, immediately bounces up again, and charges down the hallway.

JERRY

Hey! Hey!, you can't go down  
there...

The Burly Man is going, and the clerk is bottled up at his desk by patients, a nurse phoning the lab. The Man stalks down the hall, opening one door after another.

CUT TO:

85 BRIEF GLIMPSES

85

of what he sees at each turning:

- A) A very old person, on a respirator, wheezing, sitting half-upright.
- B) A man lying on his side, in a tuxedo, blood on his shirt front.

(CONTINUED)



85 CONTINUED: 85

C) A person of indeterminate age and sex, surrounded by doctors, with tubes and bottles suspended in a thicket overhead, running down to the patient, and a BLEEPING CARDIAC MONITOR.

86 BURLY MAN 86

is still angry, and in fact more so, but he's affected by these sights.

87 ANOTHER ANGLE 87

Our Man opening the door where Carter sews his daughter. He sees her sitting up.

DAD

Susan!

SUZANNE

(in terror)

Daddy!

He sees the suturing on her foot. He undergoes a transformation from anger to a sort of terror which matches that of his daughter.

DAD

Susan? Oh, my God...

He begins to cry, and clutches his daughter.

SUZANNE

Daddy...

They are hugging each other, crying hysterically. The Girl's foot is moving a lot in all of this, and Carter is trying to sew a moving target.

CARTER

Stop moving, now.

DAD

(tears in eyes)

Is she gonna be all right?

CARTER

Yeah, she's gonna be fine.

(CONTINUED)

DAD

(hugging Girl again)  
Oh, thank God, thank God...

He and his daughter rock back and forth.

SUZANNE

Daddy, I trashed the car.

DAD

That's all right, honey, everything  
is going to be all right... the  
important thing is that you're  
all right.

SUZANNE

Oh, Daddy.

Daddy, hugging his daughter, overcoming the shock, seems  
to suddenly hear her words.

DAD

What car? You mean the Caddy?

SUZANNE

Oh, Daddy, I'm sorry...

DAD

... you totalled my new Seville?

He puts his hands on his hips, and turns around the room.

DAD

It was only two weeks old...

He has been staring at the wall; his body touches some-  
thing that rattles. He looks down and sees the opened  
suture kit. It has containers of colored swabbing solu-  
tions; and syringes, needles, some complex and ugly-  
looking medical paraphernalia. He looks over at Carter  
sewing the cut. He looks back at his daughter.

DAD

It doesn't matter, honey. It was  
stupid but it doesn't matter.

SUZANNE

Oh, Daddy, I'm so sorry...

DAD

I can get another one any time.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (2)

87

And he starts hugging her again, and they rock some more. Carter, working on the foot, which rocks back and forth. Benton sticks his head in the room.

BENTON

Come on, Dr. Carter, you've got six in backup, and that's not good, this is St. Patrick's Day, and the worst is still to come, move it.

Benton leaves. The Father spins.

DAD

Who was that idiot? You take all the time you need with my Suzanne, I don't care what it costs, I want the best care she can get, you hear me? The best care.

(looking back)

Does it hurt, baby?

SUZANNE

... a little...

88 A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD BOY

88

Sitting in a room with his mother, LILY, Ross looks at the throat with a tongue depressor.

ROSS

Open wide... How long has he had a sore throat?

LILY

Since this morning.

Ross feels the neck glands, then steps back.

ROSS

Well, his temperature is only ninety-nine, and he's got a little redness, hardly any gland swelling ... Give him one aspirin every four hours and a little bed rest, and he should be fine in a couple of days.

LILY

Aspirin and bed rest? I came all the way here in the middle of the night to hear aspirin and bed rest?

(CONTINUED)

ROSS

(cool)

Ma'am, your child has a viral pharyngitis, there's no other treatment for it.

LILY

Can't you give him a shot, at least?

KID

(wrinkling face)

I don't want a shot.

ROSS

Ma'am, shots don't work with a virus. Most colds are caused by viruses, and antibiotics don't do any good.

LILY

His regular doctor always gives him a shot.

ROSS

It's really not called for here. Your son isn't really very sick.

LILY

You're not going to give him a shot.

ROSS

Well, there is something we could give him that isn't an antibiotic, but might make him a little more comfortable.

KID

I don't want a shot.

ROSS

This is a little one.

(to mother)

The nurse will be right in.

Ross stops Perez.

ROSS

Give the kid in four half a cc of sterile saline I.M.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

PEREZ

Sterile saline? Salt water.

ROSS

His mother wants a shot, give the poor kid a shot.

PEREZ

Oh, one of those.

ROSS

Yeah, one of those.

He walks off. Passing him in the other direction down the corridor, coming TOWARD us, is a MAN in a bright green band costume, with TROMBONE over his shoulder. He is hobbling. Ross glances at him, frowns. The Man winks conspiratorially.

90 THE ADMITTING DESK

90

JERRY

E.W... Yeah... what can you say  
... three white males...

(writing)

... What's the nature of the...

(hangs up)

Call respiratory, and get Dr.  
Benton, we have a shotgun wound  
to the chest coming in.

Nurse hustles off.

91 LEWIS

91

Peering at the dilated eyes of Hathaway. She releases the eyelid, and it falls to a half-closed position. Come off Lewis to see the renal dialysis machine working.

LEWIS

We get a new barbiturate level  
yet?

WOODWARD

It just came back. It's still  
four hundred.

LEWIS

I don't think we're going to get  
lucky tonight.

Working at the head of a team with an elderly woman in congestive heart failure. She is breathing with difficulty, sitting half-up in bed, and the sound of her breathing is very wet. Greene listens with stethoscope.

GREENE

Breathe in... breathe in...

All around him, the team is drawing bloods, starting IV's, putting tourniquets on the limbs. Greene stops listening and slaps an oxygen mask on the woman's face.

GREENE

You're going to be okay, dear,  
we'll get you through this.

The woman nods; she is basically alert.

GREENE

Give her four milligrams nitro  
lingual spray, lasex by straight  
I.V. push, get her sodium and  
potassium right away and a  
baseline E.K.G. Do you take  
digitalis, dear?

(she looks  
vague)

Do you take pills for your heart?  
Yes? Have you taken any today?  
This morning?

(to staff)

Once we have that E.K.G., we can  
try her on more dig. Meanwhile  
give her five of morphine and  
again in five minutes.

(to Perez)

You got all that?

SIRENS in b.g.

As Benton and Carter await the arriving patient. Greene comes into the area, goes to desk, writes in a form.

The DOORS CRASH OPEN, and a stretcher enters, a black man covered in a bloody blanket, Benton pulls the cover back to look.

Carter turns absolutely white at the sight.

94 BRIEF CUT - THE INJURY

94

Not pretty. Coils of intestines spill out through a slashed shirt.

BENTON

(cool)

This is a knife wound. I thought it was supposed to be a gunshot wound.

CARTER

I'm sorry, I feel a little...

And he runs out of the ER, through the doors.

BENTON

(sarcastic)

That's okay, I didn't need you anyway.

(to Jerry)

Notify the floor, this guy goes up right away, soon as we get his pre-op labs and send blood to the bank. Let's go.

The stretcher is wheeled away. Greene, who hasn't been paying attention, did notice that Carter took off. He finishes his report.

95 NIGHT EXTERIOR

95

A curbside lit by the large free-standing illuminated sign which reads EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE. In that light, we see Carter, sitting on the curb, his head between his knees, breathing slowly and deeply. We HOLD ON this for a moment, and then Greene comes out, looks at Carter... who has no awareness that he isn't alone... and then sits on the curb with Carter, a little distance away.

GREENE

(casual)

Feeling any better?

CARTER

Yes, uh-huh, I'll be okay in a minute. It just... got to me, just all of a sudden, it got to me. I'm not usually this way.

Raises his head.

(CONTINUED)

GREENE

Just keep your head down. There's  
no rush, just relax.

(looks at sky)

It stopped raining.

CARTER

I thought I was going to be sick.

GREENE

I used to pass out all the time.  
One day I was doing my surgery  
rotation, holding a retractor for  
Dr. Bendixon... the great Dr.  
Bendixon, the famous surgeon, he  
was a terror, he yelled and  
screamed at you, and suddenly I  
was feeling faint, and I had to  
go bend over in a corner. And I  
thought this is it, the great Dr.  
Bendixon is watching, and he knows  
I haven't got what it takes. I  
wanted to die. And I said, 'I'm  
sorry.' And Bendixon said, 'Never  
say that, kid.' He called everybody  
kid. He said, you're gonna be a  
doctor, you'll be asked to do all  
kinds of impossible things, it's an  
impossible job. Now, there's two  
kinds of doctors, he said, the  
kind that get rid of their feelings,  
and the kind that keeps them. You  
keep your feelings and you're  
going to get sick from time to  
time. That's the price you pay.  
But never say you're sorry,  
especially to me, because I used  
to get sick every damn day... and  
then he swore at me a lot...

(gets to feet)

... So don't worry about it.

(as he leaves)

I was a medical student with  
Benton, and he was green all the  
time. So don't let him give you  
any crap. It happens to everybody.

And as Greene walks back to the ER entrance, we --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE



ACT SIX

FADE IN:

96 INT. EXAMINING ROOM 96

Benton on the phone, with the stabbing victim being worked over behind him.

BENTON

Well, who's up there? Ashley and Taylor? Okay, set it up, you've got massive midline chest and abdomen in its way, on positive pressure, we'll gag him on the way up, but get 'em ready, he's a hot one.

Benton exits room.

97 INT. HALLWAY 97

Benton goes down the hall to the back waiting room. There are now five or six people waiting for sutures. He dials a wall phone.

BENTON

Marcia? Peter Benton. Look, things are getting hairy down here, you got any loose change up there you could spring for a couple of hours? Yeah, Kelly would be great, just for a couple of hours, it's St. Patrick's Day and we're getting the full load.

He hangs up. Carter comes over, wiping forehead.

BENTON

You okay?

CARTER

Yeah.

BENTON

You got a stack in there... start sewing... I've got a crush injury auto accident on the way in.

98 THE BACK ROOM 98

Carter enters.

CARTER

Who's next?

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

A WAITRESS in a French maid's uniform, black mesh stockings and black corset stands up.

WAITRESS

I am, Doctor.

He conceals his feeling that the night has turned from hectic to just plain crazy.

CARTER

Come this way, please.

99 A HALLWAY

99

Benton going down hall, as Ross comes out door.

ROSS

Peter, take a look at this...

BENTON

... I got two live ones on the way...

ROSS

... and you got another one in here.

Ross holds door open.

100 IN THE EXAMINING ROOM

100

A sixteen-year-old boy lies on his side, naked, covered from waist down by a sheet. He's a big, muscular kid who's just starting to shave.

ROSS

... Teddy's story is three days of indigestion, a little diarrhea yesterday, umbilical pain which has now moved to right lower quadrant...

BENTON

Just lie back, Teddy, and let me feel your stomach.

While Benton palpates, Ross talks.

(CONTINUED)

ROSS

... nausea and vomiting three hours ago, fever of one hundred point five, white count's twelve thousand, you can feel the distension and guarding, and he's got hyperesthesia if you want to check it.

BENTON

How old are you, Teddy?

TEDDY

Sixteen.

BENTON

I'll call the floor. Nice to meet you. Your appendicitis is going to be fine.

Benton leaves. Ross and Teddy are alone.

TEDDY

You gonna do an operation?

ROSS

I think it's best.

TEDDY

The coach is going to be mad. I'll miss the playoffs.

On the TV is a BASKETBALL GAME. Benton enters and pours coffee, sits down to write report.

TV (V.O.)

And Paxton is bringing it down, he's really mad this time, passes off to Scotty Pippin who takes the shot, misses, and this is a tight, tight ball game...

The SOUND CONTINUES OVER while KELLY, a fresh-faced intern, noticeably younger than Benton, comes into the room. Kelly is looking tired as hell.

KELLY

There aren't going to be enough people up on the floor to do all those cases if they're really hot.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

BENTON

Tell me.

KELLY

What's the score?

BENTON

Bulls down two.

102 EXAMINING ROOM

102

A forty-five-year-old man, LAWKOWSKI, stripped to the waist, who has been lying down but now sits up. Greene is in the room with him.

GREENE

Now lean forward.

Lawkowski does so.

GREENE

How's the pain?

LAWKOWSKI

Better. It's better if I lean forward.

Woodward comes in, and hands Greene three slips of paper, lab determinations. He shuffles through them.

GREENE

(looking at slips)

All right, Mr. Lawkowski, I'm going to admit you to the hospital and start you on a medical regimen, there's some question in my mind about whether that's necessary, but it's better to be safe than sorry, and I think a few days of...

He breaks off because he hears the sound of crying. The patient has his hands over his face. He's crying.

GREENE

Mr. Lawkowski...

(puts hand on shoulder)

... what is it?

He gets no answer for a moment.

GREENE

What's the matter, Mr. Lawkowski?

(CONTINUED)

LAWKOWSKI

(finally)

I know, I know the truth, you  
don't have to hide it...

GREENE

The truth...

LAWKOWSKI

I know you're being kind to me,  
but you can tell me, it's okay,  
I want to know the truth...

GREENE

Mr. O'Reilley, I've told you that  
you have a duodenal ulcer with  
complicating pancreatitis...  
rather mild pancreatitis, judging  
from the lab figures... and that's  
all you have.

LAWKOWSKI

... You can tell me...

GREENE

(a thoughtful  
pause)

You don't have cancer, Mr.  
O'Reilley.

This is an astute guess, but it works wrong on this  
patient.

LAWKOWSKI

(looking up)

See? I knew it, I knew it... It's  
cancer, you were hiding it...

He puts his face in his hands again.

GREENE

Mr. Lawkowski, every person that  
comes into this hospital, whether  
they have a pimple or a heart  
attack or a bad back, everybody  
is worried about cancer.

LAWKOWSKI

My sister, she had these pains...  
(pointing to stomach)  
... and it was cancer, she died,  
my sister...

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED: (2)

102

GREENE

Mr. Lawkowski, there are over forty causes of pain in that area besides cancer. You have the most common cause of that pain, which is an ulcer. You're lucky. It's not cancer.

LAWKOWSKI

(sniffing)

Not cancer?

GREENE

No. Your ulcer flared up today because you went to a party and drank and smoked... both of which you are going to have to quit, and...

LAWKOWSKI

... Quit drinking and smoking?

GREENE

Yes, that's right...

LAWKOWSKI

... Quit drinking and smoking?  
Are you kidding me?

103 LEWIS

103

Talking in the hall to a solemn female ADMINISTRATOR, late 30s.

LEWIS

She's been on dialysis now for three hours, and all we've done is drop her level from four hundred milligrams to three seventy. She's still comatose and unresponsive. We're forcing diuresis and we've alkalinized the urine but... She must have taken short-acting agents. She knew what she was doing.

ADMINISTRATOR

Has the family been notified?

LEWIS

I don't know, I think so.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

ADMINISTRATOR

Anybody talk to the press office?  
 (Lewis frowns)  
 I'll deal with that. It could be  
 an issue. She's fully covered on  
 the hospital policy?

LEWIS

As far as I know, yes.

ADMINISTRATOR

And your prognosis?

Lewis shakes her head. No.

ADMINISTRATOR

(after beat)

Anybody know why she did it?

LEWIS

Nobody has any idea. Her fiance's  
 an orthopedic resident, he...  
 didn't know anything either.  
 Supposed to get married in June.

The Administrator nods. There is a moment of silence.  
 Finally, she gives a little shrug.

104 AN ELDERLY MAN

104

breathing shallowly, while an X-ray machine is posi-  
 tioned. Benton stands by.

BENTON

Just a couple of pictures, Mr.  
 Cameron, so we have a better  
 idea what's going on.

He steps out of the room.

RADIOLOGIST (V.O.)

Don't move, Mr. Cameron.

105 IN THE READING ROOM

105

X-rays on a board, Benton stands by with Kelly.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

105

RADIOLOGIST

(dictating)

Patient Cameron, John, number HA  
40573, AP and lateral plain  
abdominals.

BENTON

(to Kelly)

Better call the floor, he's got  
to go. Small bowel obstruction.

RADIOLOGIST

Gas distension distal to the  
duodenum is apparent, with fluid  
levels showing as pooling in the  
jejunal area. Impression: small  
bowel obstruction, acute. This  
is a surgical candidate.

Kelly has gone. Benton takes the X-rays.

BENTON

You guys are really sharp, I don't  
know what we'd do without you.

RADIOLOGIST

Nice to see you, Peter.

(muttering)

Man of many talents, all unproven.

Benton leaves with films.

106 INT. HALLWAY

106

Lewis walks down the hall, goes into a room.

107 INT. MEDICAL ROOM

107

The band member, previously seen, is taking off his green  
shirt, his BACK TO us. He has a muscular physique. His  
trombone is upright on the examining table.

LEWIS

I'm Doctor Lewis. What seems  
to be --

He turns. She recognizes him, with mixed emotions on  
her face.

LEWIS

What are you --

(CONTINUED)



PAUL (MAN)

(grinning)

I figured it's the only way I'm  
ever going to see you.

LEWIS

But Paul, listen --

PAUL

Come here.

He starts to kiss her passionately. His shirt is off.  
She immediately resists.

LEWIS

Paul, please --

PAUL

Come on, lighten up.

LEWIS

It's not appropriate.

PAUL

Not appropriate? I'm in love  
with you. I want to see you.  
And I thought you'd like it.  
I rented this uniform...

LEWIS

Paul, we're broken up. And this  
is a bad night.

PAUL

It's always a bad night. One  
kiss.

LEWIS

(smiling)

Paul...

PAUL

Come on, one kiss. I need  
treatment. You're a doctor.

LEWIS

Just one.

PAUL

Yeah, one.

LEWIS

You bastard. I missed you so  
much.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED: (2)

107

And then she grabs him, hard, they fall back on the examining table, the TROMBONE CLATTERS on the floor.

At the door, Perez comes in, looks:

PEREZ

Oops. Excuse me.

She bangs the door shut. On the couch, Paul and Lewis break, step apart.

PAUL

This damn hospital.

LEWIS

(blowing a strand  
of hair)

Tell me.

PAUL

When do you get off?

LEWIS

Tomorrow night at six.

PAUL

Come by?

LEWIS

(after beat)

Yeah...

She throws his shirt at him, and leaves.

108 A MAN OF SIXTY

108

MR. HARVEY, lying on his back, breathing hard, with Benton placing a hand on a swollen belly. Also there, his tense WIFE and Kelly.

BENTON

After dinner?

HARVEY

Yeah, right after dinner, felt a little aching, burning, you know? Low.

BENTON

And you have an aneurysm?

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED:

108

HARVEY

Had it two years, they were going to operate on me next month.

BENTON

We're waiting for your old films, you just rest easy, Mr. Harvey.

Woodward comes in. Benton starts to exit.

WOODWARD

What bloods?

BENTON

Pre-ops, cross and type first. We'll have you fixed up right away, Mr. Harvey.

(smiling, to wife)

We're going to take care of him.

But for once Benton's not convincing. Everybody's tense.

109 INT. CORRIDOR

109

Benton and Kelly. Kelly is hanging up phone.

KELLY

That guy's leaking. He could go any time.

BENTON

Tell me. Who's on the floor?

KELLY

We're in trouble. Ashley and Max are doing the appendectomy; Gill and Levine are still doing that knife wound, and they say it'll be another couple of hours. They pulled Ed and his intern off the floor to do the lady with small bowel adhesions. We got nobody to do this one.

BENTON

Where's the vascular team?

KELLY

In Minneapolis, at that conference.

(CONTINUED)

BENTON

Damn, that's right. Where's Baker, maybe we can call him in?

KELLY

Baker's in the Bahamas with his family. We're really screwed.

BENTON

Well, we can't wait. This guy could die any minute. We can't wait.

KELLY

But there isn't anybody to do him.

BENTON

Okay: call Morgenstern, he can get over in twenty minutes, and you tell Ashley and Gill that they should get in to help me as soon as they can because I'm starting a ruptured aneurysm.

KELLY

(mouth open)

Peter, look, it's none of my business, but you're just a resident, you ever done one of these before?

BENTON

There's nobody else. I'm not going to do the procedure. I'll just stick my finger in the dike and try to keep him alive until somebody shows up who knows what they're doing. Call the O.R., get me a team, set up for the laparotomy.

Goes through door to patient.

BENTON

Okay, Mr. Harvey, we're going to take you up to surgery.

MRS. HARVEY

(alarmed)

Who's going to do the operation?

BENTON

Doctor Morgenstern, our chief of service here, is on his way.

110 THE HALLWAY 110

Kelly on the phone.

KELLY

Well, find Morgenstern, will you, we have a blown aortic aneurysm and Benton's starting it, he'd like help. Yeah, that's what I said. Doctor Benton's starting.

111 THE SURGICAL FLOOR 111

Late at night. A woman gets up from behind the desk, hangs up, and walks to a blackboard. She starts writing. A couple of nurses in green scrubsuits come by.

SCRUB NURSE #1

What's on?

SCRUB NURSE #2

Ruptured abdominal aneurysm.  
Coming up now.

SCRUB NURSE #1

Who's doing it?

The blackboard, just as the Nurse writes: Dr. Benton.

SCRUB NURSE #2

Dr. Benton?

112 BENTON 112

racing up stairs, moving like hell.

113 THE SURGEON'S CHANGING ROOM 113

Benton entering, tearing off his clothes. Another MAN is there, almost fully changed.

ANAESTHETIST #2

I'm doing anaesthesia for you, Peter.

BENTON

(preoccupied)

Fine, get down there, see if the blood bank has sent us twenty units, we need at least twenty, and get the nurses moving. Patient's on his way.

(CONTINUED)

ANAESTHETIST #2

(hesitating)

You, ah, feel okay about this?

BENTON

(the truth)

Ed, I'm scared as hell, but the  
guy's already ruptured, his belly's  
puffed up like a balloon and his  
crit's shot to hell. I gotta do  
him. I'm his only hope. Poor  
bastard.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

FADE IN:

114 THE ADMITTING DESK

114

JERRY

You hear about Benton?

GREENE

What?

JERRY

There's nobody to do a ruptured  
A.A., so he's doing it.

GREENE

Where's the night team? Why  
aren't they...

JERRY

... all busy. They have three  
procedures going up there already.

GREENE

Guess Peter won't be making any  
jokes for a while.

JERRY

(looking off)

I don't believe it.

AN EXTREMELY PRETTY GIRL has entered the ER wearing a tight blouse and a short skirt, which she holds up in front of her, and flaps, fanning her thighs.

JERRY

I just don't believe it.

Greene is starting to laugh; he turns away so the Girl won't see.

JERRY

You got a guess on the diagnosis  
of that one?

They don't have long to wait, the girl marches right up, still fanning, and says with an utterly straight face.

PRETTY GIRL

I burned my legs.

JERRY

I see.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED:

114

PRETTY GIRL

I did it with hot water, and it hurts. It's not funny.

JERRY

Well, Miss, if you'll just give me your name.

115 BENTON

115

Walking down a deserted corridor, and going into an operating room, sticking his head in the door. A team is at work.

BENTON

Evening, gentlemen, I just want you to know I'm starting a ruptured abdominal aortic aneurism in room five and I'd appreciate a hand when you have a minute.

He leaves. The SURGEONS work in silence for a moment.

SURGEON #1

What'd he say?

SURGEON #2 (JIMMY)

He said he's doing an aneurism.

SURGEON #1

That's a joke, isn't it?

SURGEON #2 (JIMMY)

(to circulating nurse)

Cheryl? Go make sure he's joking.

They work on in silence a few moments. The Nurse comes back.

CHERYL

Dr. Ashley, he's doing it.

SURGEON #1

You're kidding!

(to other surgeon)

Jimmy, break and help him. I'll finish here and get there as soon as I can.

116 BENTON'S OR

116

Finishing his scrub, Benton swings through the doors to the O.R.

(CONTINUED)



Mr. Harvey, the patient, is there, being prepped furiously. The elaborate surgical routine is carried out.

BENTON

Okay, let's move, girls, this isn't a picnic, it's the late, late show.

(to Anaesthetist)

He under?

ANAESTHETIST #2

He's under.

BENTON

Okay, prep, please.

(starts swabbing)

Stop staring at me, I'm not trying to be a hero, I'm just trying to keep the poor guy alive. The only thing that's wrong around here is that I'm his best chance of survival...

(elaborate fatigue)

a heavy responsibility, tra-la-la. Okay, plastic. Yes, folks, he's gone completely nuts, he's off his rocker.

One of the Nurses looks through the glass doors and sees another surgeon scrubbing.

OR NURSE

Somebody's coming to the rescue.

BENTON

Looks like Jimmy. The only guy in the hospital who knows less about vascular surgery than I do. Is Mr. Harvey happy?

ANAESTHETIST #2

He isn't complaining.

BENTON

Well, let's go. Knife, please. Mark the start of the operation at two-thirteen ayem and let's see how long it takes the chief to get off his girl friend and into his work clothes.

Benton begins. Jimmy enters (Surgeon #2), scrubbed arms high.

(CONTINUED)

BENTON

Started without you, Jimmy. Time and leaking aneurisms wait for no man. Sponge there.

(to Jimmy)

We're going right down the linea alba, nothing fancy, he's got a fifty percent mortality anyway. Sucker, let's get that sucker, thank you, for all the good it will do.

Jimmy is gowned and gloved, and steps up to the table.

BENTON

Just in time. Pick-up...

SURGEON #2 (JIMMY)

Pick-up.

BENTON

Pick-up.

They alternate picking up the peritoneum with forceps, to be sure of releasing the bowel underneath.

SURGEON #2 (JIMMY)

(staring, worried)

Lotta blood in there, Peter.

BENTON

Precisely this man's problem. Okay, here we go, wish me luck.  
Knife.

He cuts the peritoneum. Blood rushes out through the incision, pouring in a huge red wave over both sides of the table. The monitors all give constant electronic screams.

BENTON

Mother... Now!

He plunges his hand through the open incision, feeling around. He winces above his mask; his eyes wrinkling with tension.

BENTON

Can't find it... damn, there... no, no... wait a minute... Jimmy, get your hand in here and push away that small intestine, that's the stuff... Ah!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BENTON (CONT'D)

Where are you, little leak... How bad is his pressure?

ANAESTHETIST #2

You won't like it.

BENTON

I won't like it? Think about him.  
(to circulating nurse)

Barbara, hang up another five or six units, this fellow would appreciate it very much... wait a minute, wait a minute...

(feeling)

It's too much to hope for... Yeah, I got it. I got my hand on it! Time down, call it out in minutes, now let's suck this field clean so we can see what the hell we're doing, if anything. I got it!

NURSE (V.O.)

(on intercom)

Dr. Benton, the Chief Resident is in the hospital and on his way.

BENTON

Well, I'd applaud but I got one hand tied up here. Suck that field, we got the Chief coming, we don't want him to think we don't know what we're doing... Pressure?

ANAESTHETIST #2

One hundred over seventy and falling.

BENTON

I won't sweat that. Keep that blood going in by I.V. Push. Jimmy, your hands are trembling.

SURGEON #2 (JIMMY)

Can't imagine why.

BENTON

Neither can I, everything's under control here, all we got to do is sit and wait.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED: (4)

116

CIRCULATING NURSE (CHERYL)

Dr. Benton, Dr. Ashley is finishing up in four and says he'll be with you in three minutes.

BENTON

All of a sudden I got all the help I want.

117 THE EXTREMELY PRETTY GIRL'S FACE

117

An extraordinary placid, calm, face, staring forward.

GREENE

You a college student?

PRETTY GIRL

Uh-huh. Sacred Heart.

GREENE

How did this happen?

PRETTY GIRL

I was pouring some hot water into the sink. It splashed on my legs.

As she looks down, CAMERA PANS DOWN to show Greene wrapping gauze around her upper thighs. He works efficiently, quickly, with no sexual overtones to it at all.

GREENE

Well, it's not bad, just first degree burns, no blistering, and it won't scar.

PRETTY GIRL

It's very sensitive skin.

GREENE

Uh-huh.

PRETTY GIRL

Your touch is nice.

GREENE

These medications should make you feel better.

PRETTY GIRL

Your fingers are very long.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

117

GREENE

(working)

Uh-huh...

PRETTY GIRL

Long and strong...

Greene doesn't answer, he just wraps.

PRETTY GIRL

I wanted to change first, and put on another pair of underpants. I knew you'd be seeing my underpants.

GREENE

Uh-huh.

PRETTY GIRL

Touching them.

GREENE

Now, you'll want to keep these bandages dry for the next week or so, so don't take any showers or baths, just sponge baths.

PRETTY GIRL

Why is that nurse in the room?

GREENE

It's hospital policy.

PRETTY GIRL

She's not doing anything, she doesn't have to be here... Are you afraid of me?

GREENE

No. Should I be?

PRETTY GIRL

Your fingers feel so good.

GREENE

You'll be just fine in a few days.

118 A CORRIDOR

118

The placid girl leaving, walking away down the corridor, the bandages apparent beneath her miniskirt. She walks with a seductive sway. In the f.g., Greene leans against a wall, with Woodward.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

118

GREENE

Thanks, Lydia.

WOODWARD

That's really something.

GREENE

Yeah. Classic hysteric.

The girl wiggling her way past the admitting desk, and the Admitting Clerk eyes her, shaking his head. The PHONE RINGS.

JERRY

E.R.

119 THE DOCTOR'S LOUNGE

119

Lewis is writing a report, her head propped on her hand while she writes with the other. There is a TALK SHOW on the RADIO.

HOST (V.O.)

Good evening, Hall Barker here, and you're on nightline.

WOMAN CALLER (V.O.)

Good evening, Hall, I want to say first I love your show and listen every night.

HOST (V.O.)

Well, thank you. Do you have a comment?

WOMAN CALLER (V.O.)

Yes, I want to tell you about my daughter. Now, she was in the hospital for her gall bladder, you know, they took out her gall bladder...

HOST (V.O.)

Uh-huh...

WOMAN CALLER (V.O.)

... and she was in, oh, I guess ten days, and you know what it cost? Twelve thousand dollars, more than twelve thousand dollars, that's what it cost, and I want to know where doctors get off, charging money like that.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

119

During this, Lewis, writing, drops off to sleep, wakes with a start, keeps writing, drops off again.

HOST (V.O.)

Medical costs certainly are rising.

WOMAN CALLER (V.O.)

Well, I think it's a scandal, I think those doctors should be ashamed of themselves.

120 INT. EXAMINING ROOM

120

Lewis, with a middle-aged patient, LLEWELLYN.

LLEWELLYN

Doc, I got a terrible problem.

LEWIS

What's that?

LLEWELLYN

I can't get to sleep. I got real bad insomnia, doc.

LEWIS

Insomnia...

LLEWELLYN

What should I do for it, Doc?

LEWIS

(low)

Become a doctor.

121 IN THE OPERATING ROOM

121

BENTON

They're sure taking their time getting here, they've been scrubbing for the last month.

He looks through the glass window: we see two surgeons scrubbing.

(CONTINUED)

BENTON

You know, there's times like this, when I get into a reflective mood, and I pause and think...

MORGENTSTERN

Give it to me quick.

BENTON

Fifty-seven-year old white male in good health previously seen at this hospital eight weeks ago where on routine physical he was found to have a pulsatile abdominal mass with aortic calcification on X-ray; mass measured approximately two by four centimeters and elective surgery was planned and scheduled at the earliest possible date which was sometime next week. Patient remained asymptomatic until this evening when he complained at bedtime of a brief, severe, intermittent pulsing pain centered in mid-back with radiation bilaterally. He came into the hospital and was seen two hours later where he had a distended abdomen, signs of peritoneal irritation and a reduced hemocrit. He continued to complain of pain but now it was generalized throughout the abdomen.

This speech is delivered while the two surgeons are gowned and gloved; they step up to the operative field. Benton and Jimmy step back.

MORGENSTERN

So you decided to open him up.

BENTON

There were no takers for the job at the time.

MORGENSTERN

This is the messiest incision I've seen in years. A good vet would make a better skin cut than this. What's his pressure?

(CONTINUED)



121 CONTINUED: (2)

121

ANAESTHETIST #2  
Ninety over sixty-five and he's  
gotten twelve units.

MORGENSTERN  
Okay, we'll take over from here  
and try to make something of it.

Benton waits a moment, but the two new surgeons talk  
technically among themselves, ignoring him. Finally he  
turns to leave.

MORGENSTERN  
Oh, Peter.

Benton stops, turns. The Chief Resident talks without  
ever taking his eyes from the operative field.

MORGENSTERN  
You did the right thing, Peter.  
You were lucky as hell, but you  
were right to open him up. Good  
work.

Benton just nods, strips off his gloves, and leaves.

122 BENTON

122

Walking down the corridor, past the nurses and up the  
stairs to the surgeon's lounge, which is deserted. He  
stands at the lounge, walks in, takes off his mask and  
cap, and suddenly raises his arms and screams "Yahoo"  
and jumps up and down like a little kid.

123 DOCTOR'S LOUNGE

123

Lewis is writing, still, as Benton enters.

LEWIS  
How'd it go?

BENTON  
He's still alive. Morgenstern  
took it over.

LEWIS  
Congratulations.

BENTON  
How's Hathaway?

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

LEWIS

(quick headshake)

Not going to make it. We dialyzed her down to a serum level of three hundred, but her respiratory function's too depressed.

BENTON

You got her on positive pressure?

LEWIS

We got her on everything... It isn't going to happen. They're transferring her up to the fifth floor.

BENTON

They contact her family?

LEWIS

Yeah, her family is in...  
 (drifts off, out of simple fatigue)  
 ... in... I can't remember, Cleveland I think. Maybe Pittsburgh. They found them.

Benton's BEEPER GOES OFF. He gets up off couch.

BENTON

No rest for the wicked.

124 A SCREAMING INFANT

124

With face and body black and blue; the CHILD HOWLS. Ross examines delicately.

ROSS

Well, we'll have to get X-rays right away. How'd this happen?

ANNETTE

He fell out of his crib.

The mother, ANNETTE, is well-dressed, aristocratic.

ROSS

He fell out of his crib.

ANNETTE

You don't believe me?

(CONTINUED)

ROSS

No.

ANNETTE

I'm telling you he fell out of his crib.

ROSS

Lady, it's very late at night, and I'm tired, I'm really tired. You have a child with multiple contusions and they're at least eight hours old and I think he was beaten and you brought him in only because he was screaming so much you couldn't get to sleep; I think he may have a skull fracture and I'll bet when we do X-rays we find several healed fractures and I'll bet this is a battered child.

ANNETTE

I can have you arrested for saying things like that, do you think I would harm my child?

ROSS

It happens all the time.

ANNETTE

I assure you, whoever you are...

ROSS

Ross, Doctor Ross...

ANNETTE

Well, Doctor Ross, I assure you that your suspicions are wholly unfounded and that there had been no deliberate attempt to injure my child, he simply fell from his crib.

ROSS

How'd he burn his legs?

ANNETTE

Burn his legs?

ROSS

These marks here are healed burn scars on his legs, how'd that happen?

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED: (2)

124

ANNETTE

Well, I, I don't know anything about any burns on the legs, I think it's your imagination, is what I think --

ROSS

(interrupting)

... Lady. I have to tell you frankly, when I see a child like this, I think it's rotten and lousy, and if you don't like that --

ANNETTE

You can't speak to me that way, I'm an attorney!

ROSS

In that case, I'm sure you know the agency I'm about to call.

And he storms out of the room.

125 THE HALLWAY

125

Ross exits into the corridor and Perez passes him.

ROSS

Did you find that chart on the patient in six?

PEREZ

I don't know where it is.

ROSS

(raising voice)

Well, find it.

PEREZ

(raising voice)

Well, I don't know where it is.

ROSS

(shouting)

You think I'm deaf, I heard you, I want you to find me the damned chart and find it now.

PEREZ

(shouting)

I don't know where it is.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

125

And KPerez storms off. Ross stands there, then walks down the corridor in the other direction.

In the b.g., A COP, struggles in the door with a drunk on his shoulder. He dumps him into a chair. Greene goes over.

GREENE

What's the problem?

COP

We picked him up in Old Town, he was standing, blocking traffic, but he's got that smell, so I thought I'd check...

GREENE

(sniffing breath)

... You did the right thing.

(to Clerk)

Let's get him down to one of the rooms, we got a diabetic ketosis.

Some orderlies come up to wrestle the body down the hall. Greene goes after them, turning to Cop.

GREENE

You probably saved his life...

The Cop sort of preens. He looks at the admitting Clerk.

JERRY

What do you want, a medal?

126 GREENE

126

Directing therapy of the diabetic.

GREENE

Let's have glucose by I.V. push and get me two hundred units of insulin standing by in a syringe.

WOODWARD

You want N.P.N.?

GREENE

Not on your life, or his. I want straight insulin and I want him hydrated as fast as you can. When you have a urine on him, call me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

126

GREENE (CONT'D)

Get sodium, chlorides and  
potassium and let me know when you  
have it.

Greene comes out of the room, and runs into the head  
nurse.

OLIGARIO

Richie, did you get the message  
your wife called?

GREENE

No...  
(looks at watch)  
I'll call her in the morning.

OLIGARIO

Yeah.

127 INT. SURGICAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - NIGHT

127

A high-tech surrounding. CLOSE ON MR. HARVEY, the aneur-  
ism patient unconscious, but still alive. His wife sits  
beside the bed, amid the monitors.

Benton enters quietly, looks at the charts.

BENTON

He seems to be doing fine, so far.

MRS. HARVEY

I'm so grateful. Dr. Morgenstern  
came in so quickly. He saved his  
life.

BENTON

Yes, ma'am. Dr. Morgenstern is a  
wonderful surgeon.

MRS. HARVEY

He said you did a lot, too. Thank  
you.

BENTON

Oh, ma'am, I didn't do anything  
but help out a little.

He turns to go, sees Morgenstern standing just outside  
the door. He's heard all of it. Benton exits.

BENTON

I better get back to the E.R.

Morgenstern just nods.

## 128 THE ADMITTING DESK

128

Perez is talking to Jerry, the clerk. Ross comes down the hall to her.

ROSS

Listen, I'm sorry I yelled.

PEREZ

Want some coffee?

ROSS

Sure.

## 129 A DRUNKEN REVELER

129

Lying on his back, while Carter sews his forehead.

MURPHY

Yeah, so I'm getting into the car, and I've had a couple, I wouldn't kid you about that, and I close the door for my wife, and walk around the car, and slip and bang -- right on the bumper, my head. Hell of a party, though. You Irish?

CARTER

No.

MURPHY

Well, this is St. Patrick's Day, see, it's an Irish holiday, it's like, you know, Christmas or Easter or something, but for Irish.

CARTER

Uh-huh.

Yawns.

MURPHY

And I had...  
(yawns)  
... too much to drink.

CARTER

I'll be finished in a minute, Mr. Murphy.

130 THE ADMITTING DESK 130

Jerry yawns, behind the desk. Lewis comes over.

LEWIS

I'll be in room three.

Jerry nods, she walks down the hall.

131 A ROOM 131

As Lewis goes in, lies down on a stretcher, and is instantly asleep with a suddenness that seems like she's been killed. She does not move.

132 THE ADMITTING DESK 132

Benton comes in and looks around.

BENTON

Nobody else? That's it?

JERRY

Well, I got a little problem, this throat of mine, it's acting up...

BENTON

You've got days, maybe minutes to live. Which room?

JERRY

(consulting clipboard)

Four or five are open.

BENTON

Five.

He turns and walks off.

A hallway, as Murphy exits, waving thanks to Carter who exits, and walks to the back room. It's empty; no patients. He sits down in a chair, leans his head against the wall, and looks across the room at Young, who is making notes, wide awake. Carter stares. In seconds, he is snoring.

Greene comes in from X-ray, and walks to the admitting desk.

GREENE

Is that it?

(CONTINUED)



132 CONTINUED:

132

JIMMY

Well, if you could look at my throat, I have this little soreness...

GREENE

I'll be in four. Wake me at six-thirty.

JIMMY

(looks at watch)

Give you almost an hour and a half. You're lucky.

Greene nods, and goes to the room. CAMERA FOLLOWS HIM through the ER. He takes out his notebook and writes, then tears out a sheet. He removes a roll of tape from his pocket, and tears off a piece of tape. He tapes the note paper to the door, then goes into the room, closes the door. The note reads:

DR. GREENE  
WAKE AT 6:30

133 INSIDE THE ROOM

133

Greene lies down, snaps off the bedside light, shifts the slightest amount and is instantly out cold.

A rectangle of white opens, and a silhouetted figure is there.

NURSE

Dr. Greene, it's six-thirty.

BLACK.

THE END